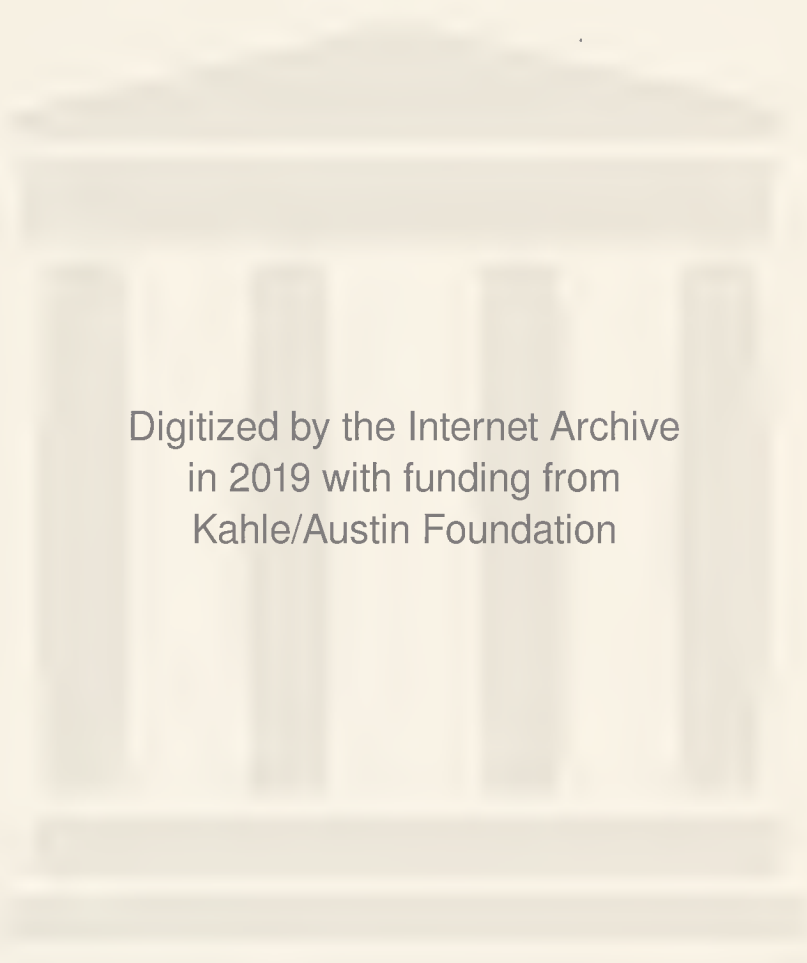


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The Japanese Communist Party, 1922-1945

The Japanese Communist Party 1922-1945

by George M. Beckmann & Okubo Genji

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Preface

This book was undertaken because of the authors' interest in two aspects of modern Japanese history. First, we wanted to study the Japanese Communist Party—both as a secret revolutionary organization in the prewar Japanese left-wing movement and as the ideological precursor of the Communist Party and the left-wing factions of the Socialist Party of postwar Japan: we wanted to examine the role of the party in spreading Marxism and Marxism-Leninism in prewar Japan. Second, we hoped to cast new light on the nature of the Japanese imperial system through an analysis of its reaction to the challenge of Marxism and Marxism-Leninism. At the same time, we wanted to study the influence of Japanese conditions, including the imperial system with its nationalism and expansionism, on the Japanese communist movement. As our investigations progressed, we came to realize that our work had significance for the study of international communism, especially in view of the continuing difficulties of the Communist International in formulating strategy and tactics for the Japanese communist movement and in maintaining control over it.

We are indebted to a number of organizations and institutions that have provided both encouragement and financial support. They include the Ford Foundation, the Foreign Area Fellowship Program, the Board of Foreign Scholars and the Fulbright Secretariat in Japan, and the Endowment Association and Faculty Research Program of the University of Kansas. Our indebtedness to the many scholars whose research has provided part of the foundation on which this book was written is not individually acknowledged here, but we have called attention to their work in the notes and bibliography.

G.M.B.

O.G.

Contents

1	Revolutionary Socialism in Japan, 1898–1921	1
2	From Communist Group to Communist Party, 1920–1922	30
3	The Party, Yamakawaism, and Dissolution, 1922–1924	55
4	The Bureau and the Group, 1924–1926	79
5	Reestablishment of the Party, 1926–1927	105
6	Suppression of the Party, 1928	138
7	Reorganization and Defections, 1928–1930	164
8	The Struggle for a Firm Strategy and Structure, 1930–1932	197
9	Years of Retreat, 1932–1945	239
	Appendixes	279
	<i>A.</i> Draft Platform of 1922, 279. <i>B.</i> Shanghai Theses of 1925, 283. <i>C.</i> Moscow Theses of 1926, 293. <i>D.</i> 1927 Theses, 295. <i>E.</i> 1931 Theses, 309. <i>F.</i> 1932 Theses, 332. <i>G.</i> Nosaka-Yamamoto Letter of 1936, 352.	
	Biographical Sketches	362
	Chronology	390
	Notes	403
	Bibliography	429
	Index	443

The Japanese Communist Party, 1922-1945

Revolutionary Socialism in Japan, 1898-1921

Socialism took hold in Japan among intellectuals in the decade following the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, when industrialization and urbanization began to have noticeable impact on Japanese society.¹ The earliest socialist organizations were social study groups, and of these the most influential was the Society for the Study of Socialism (Shakaishugi Kenkyukai), founded by a handful of Christian intellectuals in Tokyo in October 1898. Its members were pledged to study and discuss the advisability of applying socialism in Japan; they used as sources the works of a variety of European and American socialist thinkers, including Saint-Simon, Fourier, Proudhon, Lassalle, Bebel, Henry George, and Marx. Those who became committed to socialism, some 40 members in all, formed the Socialist Society (Shakaishugi Kyokai) in May 1900. Their socialism, whose basic tenets they hoped to disseminate as widely as possible among the masses, was an amalgam of Christian humanitarianism, social democracy, and pacifism.

Some of these intellectuals looked to the budding labor movement to achieve economic and social reform. Metalworkers, machinists, and railway workers—all part of the modern industrial sector of the economy—had by the turn of the century formed labor unions in order to put their demands before Japan's capitalists. They had the skills required to establish bargaining power and, for a time, the courage to resort to the use of strikes. In all, some 20,000 workers in the Tokyo-Yokohama area, or about 5 per cent of the modern industrial labor force, were unionized; however, most of the unions were small, having fewer than 500 members. Pioneer social reformers like Takano Fusataro and Katayama Sen became active in the labor movement and sought to expand and strengthen it through the formation of new unions. But they were not revolutionaries. They wanted to reform capitalism and work for the gradual achievement of a socialist society. They found, however, that there were certain serious obstacles to be overcome. Not only were they faced with apathy on the part of the majority of workers, but the state used its full power to suppress

their efforts.² The police, who equated unionism with anarchism, constantly broke up labor meetings, and in the spring of 1900 the Diet passed the Public Peace Police Law, Article 17 of which declared organized action on the part of workers to be a disturbance of the public peace. For all practical purposes, the formation of unions and the calling of strikes became illegal. The labor movement temporarily stagnated thereafter, except for spontaneous outbursts by workers that invariably culminated in violence, a significant example being the 1907 riots at the copper mines at Ashio and Besshi. Not until World War I were conditions favorable for a second attempt at establishing a labor movement.

The direct suppression of the labor movement by the state, and indirectly by the capitalists behind the state, stimulated some members of the Socialist Society, for the most part Christians, to look to the formation of a political party in order to achieve some fundamental reforms. Five of the six men who launched the Social Democratic Party (*Shakai Minshuto*) in May 1901 were Christians—Abe Isoo, Katayama Sen, Kawakami Kiyoshi, Kinoshita Naoe, and Nishikawa Kojiro. The sixth, Kotoku Shusui, was a product of the radical wing of the democratic movement. Their goal was “to break down the gap between the poor and the rich through pure socialism and democracy to realize a victory of pacifism in the whole world.” Their “Platform of Action” to achieve that goal was based on the principle of reform through legal means. They denounced anarchism and violence. “It is only the nihilist and the anarchist who brandishes a sword and throws bombs. Since our Social Democratic Party absolutely opposes the use of force, we will never imitate the foolishness of the nihilist and anarchist.” The platform called for the establishment of basic rights, especially universal suffrage, repeal of the Public Peace Police Law, abolition of the peerage system, establishment of a system of free education, nationalization of the means of transportation and production, public ownership of land, and disarmament. It concluded with a reiteration of their commitment to legal means and an evolutionary course of action: “The time for achieving our aspirations will come in that future day when our party obtains a majority in the Diet.”³

The government lost no time in moving against the Social Democratic Party. Immediately after the formation of the party was announced publicly, the home minister ordered it to dissolve, prohibited circulation of the newspaper editions carrying the announcement, and charged the editors responsible for them with violating the Press Law.

Clearly the government would not tolerate the formation of a political party that sought to alter the existing political and economic order.

Deprived of the opportunity to establish an effective labor base and prohibited from engaging in politics, Japanese socialists turned once again to the organization of study groups and to the dissemination of ideas. Many of them toured the country, holding meetings and discussions among intellectuals and workers. The Socialist Society, for example, held 182 meetings between April 1902 and the end of 1903. Although the government tolerated socialism as an academic and theoretical movement, it would not countenance an activist one. When the socialists attempted to spread their ideas among the masses, they suffered constant harassment by the state. The police confiscated their publications, and the editors and publishers were often fined or imprisoned. For example, when Kotoku and Sakai Toshihiko, who was one of the first systematic students of Marxism, sought to create opposition to the war with Russia through the weekly *Commoners' News* (*Heimin Shinbun*), the Katsura cabinet frequently prohibited distribution of issues, arrested and jailed the editors, and ultimately forced them to cease publication.⁴ The police also interfered with the conduct of socialist meetings, often dissolving them. The heaviest blow fell in November 1904, when the government ordered the Socialist Society to disband.

REFORMERS AND REVOLUTIONARIES

Government attitudes and actions tended to split Japan's socialists into two groups by 1906—reformers and revolutionaries. The former were for the most part Christian social democrats like Abe, Kinoshita, and Katayama. They spoke through the monthly *New Era* (*Shin Kigen*), which exuded a kind of Tolstoyan humanitarianism and advocated universal suffrage and social reform through parliamentary action. The latter were materialists who derived their ideas from German and French Marxist and anarcho-syndicalist sources. Their number included Kotoku, who had come to scorn Christianity, Nishikawa, who deserted his former Christian friends, Sakai, Yamaguchi Koken, and younger men like Yamakawa Hitoshi, Arahata Kanson, and Otsugi Sakae. Nishikawa and Yamaguchi published *The Light* (*Hikari*) and Sakai, *Studies in Socialism* (*Shakaishugi Kenkyu*), in order to popularize the ideas of class struggle and revolutionary action by class-conscious workers. Earlier, in November 1904, Kotoku and Sakai had

published Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto* in *Commoners' News*, only to have the police immediately ban the issue. While the materialist socialists based their strategy on Marxist principles like the class struggle, they were at the same time attracted to the tactics of anarcho-syndicalism.

The career of Kotoku, who emerged as the theoretical leader of the materialist camp, illustrates the changes in approach first from political liberalism to social democracy and then from social democracy to anarcho-syndicalism. He was born in 1871 in Kochi Prefecture on the island of Shikoku, the birthplace of the democratic movement of the 1870's and 1880's. After graduation from middle school, Kotoku went to Tokyo to live with a prominent member of the Liberal Party, and in the capital city got his first taste of the repressive power of the state. He was among 300 political dissenters ordered to leave Tokyo in December 1887, when the government first enforced the Peace Preservation Ordinance. He became a disciple of Nakae Chomin—writer, editor, translator of Rousseau, and a leading champion of popular rights. Under Nakae's influence, Kotoku became a strong advocate of universal suffrage and the initiative and referendum. He supported himself as a staff writer for *Central News* (*Chuo Shinbun*), which he quit when it became the organ of the oligarch Ito Hirobumi in 1899, and for *Morning News* (*Yorozu Choho*), where he won his early fame. He became interested in socialism in the 1890's and, like his colleagues in the Socialist Society, advocated economic and social reform through the achievement of parliamentary democracy. His transformation from evolutionary socialist to "radical anarchist," according to his own account, was the result of his antiwar struggle against the state and his confinement in prison for five months in 1905.⁵ He was thoroughly converted to anarcho-syndicalism through his reading of Kropotkin and through direct observation of the activities of the Industrial Workers of the World during a visit to the United States from November 1905 to June 1906.

Kotoku explained his new position in speeches and articles after his return to Japan.⁶ He now believed that the abolition of the state, the destruction of capitalism, and the formation of a free society could be achieved only by the direct action of organized workers. He rejected action in the political field, maintaining that efforts to gain universal suffrage and seek reform through the Diet were a waste of time. He insisted that the Diet would forever be the tool of the propertied class: if the promise of democracy ever showed prospects of becoming more

than a delusion for deceiving the people, the propertied class would use all the power and influence that come from the possession of wealth to reduce the role of government to the simple function of acting as a policeman. Moreover, as an anarchist, Kotoku regarded the Japanese social democrats as corrupted by political power, since they accepted the premises of the bourgeois state. According to Kotoku, the force necessary to bring about the transformation of society lay in the weapons of labor—direct negotiations with employers and strikes, especially the general strike, which was to be the instrument for compelling the bourgeois state to yield its place on the historical stage to voluntary associations of the wage-earning class. Kotoku recognized that anarcho-syndicalism departed from strict anarchism in its utilization of the labor union as a necessary organizational form, but it was attractive to him, as it was to radical socialists in Europe and the United States, because it appeared to provide a shortcut to socialism. Moreover, it seemed suited to the Japanese scene, where the gradual approach of the social democrats was making little, if any, headway in the face of a repressive regime. Kotoku felt that the spontaneous labor riots of 1906 and 1907 confirmed this judgment.

While Japan's socialists during this period can be divided into two main camps, there are some dangers in such a classification, especially when characterizing particular individuals. Kotoku and Katayama present no major problems in this respect: Kotoku was impatient with the parliamentarianism of the social democrats and looked to the direct action of anarcho-syndicalism, while Katayama espoused the parliamentary tactics of social democracy and was unequivocal in his condemnation of anarcho-syndicalism as a dangerous doctrine. However, Yamakawa, though strongly influenced by the ideas of Kotoku, upheld political action as a means of developing class consciousness among workers. Tazoe Tetsuji, close to Katayama, made the strongest arguments for a parliamentary policy, criticizing direct action as woefully ineffective. Sakai, hoping to effect a compromise, advocated a combination of direct action and parliamentarianism. Classification also tends to obscure the extent to which individuals in both camps increasingly utilized Marxist ideas to support their arguments. Kotoku and Katayama both believed that the degeneration of the working class was an inevitable result of capitalism, but Kotoku held that the emancipation of the proletariat was contingent upon the destruction of capitalism, while Katayama believed that it could be achieved through reform. Both felt that Marxism provided a theoretical frame-

work for analyzing existing conditions in Japanese society and for determining the general principles of strategy for the socialist movement, but not its tactics. Even Sakai, who had perhaps the deepest knowledge of Marxism among all the early Japanese socialists, could not find in it the basis for revolutionary tactics. Such an insight came only after the Russian Revolution and the popularization of Leninism in Japan.

The Japanese socialists, despite their differences, joined together to take advantage of the improved political atmosphere following the installation of the Saionji cabinet in January 1906, and formed the Japan Socialist Party (*Nihon Shakaito*). Its announced objective was the achievement of socialism within the limits of the law. Perhaps for this reason, the party was not suppressed by the government, although it actively disseminated socialist ideas. But the party, which had less than 200 members, was soon rent by factionalism based on differences of opinion regarding tactics; against the background of labor unrest, the appeal of the direct action tactics of anarcho-syndicalism grew. Kotoku attacked the social democratic parliamentarians at the February 1907 party convention and called for direct action by organized workers. He and his followers succeeded in getting the phrase “within the limits of the law” deleted from the party constitution, but they were unable to get a majority to endorse direct action as the major, if not sole, tactical weapon. Nevertheless, there was much greater support for Kotoku than there was for Tazoe and his advocacy of a commitment to a parliamentary policy. In the end, a bare majority endorsed the view espoused by Sakai, who still sought to maintain unity through compromise, that the forms of activity, including the movement for universal suffrage, be left up to the party members’ individual discretion.⁷ When the results of the convention were reported in the *Commoners’ News*, which had been revived as a daily in January 1907, the Saionji cabinet quickly ordered the dissolution of the Socialist Party, denouncing it for fomenting labor unrest. Later, in April 1907, Saionji forced the *Commoners’ News* to cease publication. Subsequent cabinets maintained the policy of suppression, and the socialists made no further attempts at political organization for more than a decade.

However, the socialists—reformers and revolutionaries alike—continued to attack capitalists, politicians, bureaucrats, and the military, although they did not gain any popular support. When General Katsura, the prime minister who had ordered the Socialist Society to dis-

band in 1904, took office again in January 1908, he was determined to destroy the socialist movement, and to rid Japan of socialists once and for all. He instructed the police to destroy all subversive literature and to arrest anyone who publicly espoused socialism. Sakai, Yamakawa, Arahata, and Osugi were among his first victims. The occasion was the "Red Flag Incident" in Tokyo in June 1908, when, after a party to celebrate Yamaguchi's release from jail, a group of Kotoku's followers staged a demonstration by waving two flags inscribed with the words "Anarchism" and "Anarchism-Communism." The police broke up the demonstration and arrested many of the participants. Sakai, Yamakawa, Arahata, and Osugi were among the 14 sentenced to jail; they were given two-year terms.

Katsura's policy of suppression reached its climax in the summer of 1910 when Kotoku and a group of his followers were arrested and charged with plotting to assassinate the Meiji emperor and his family, as well as the ministers of state. They were quickly tried and convicted of treason, without the right of appeal. Twelve of them, including Kotoku, were executed within three days after their sentencing in January 1911, another 12 were condemned to life imprisonment, and two were sentenced to from eight to ten years in prison. Whether Kotoku was actively involved in the plot or whether he was the victim of a government frame-up has never been resolved. In any event, Sakai, Yamakawa, Arahata, and Osugi escaped death only because they were already in jail.

Katsura came very close to achieving his objective. The high treason case had the effect of discrediting the entire socialist movement and of justifying an intensification of police action. The police made no effort to distinguish between moderates and radicals. For example, Katayama, a bitter critic of the anarcho-syndicalists, was arrested and sentenced to five months in jail for supporting a streetcar strike in Tokyo in 1912, and was continually harassed by the police thereafter. In 1914, he fled to the United States, where he later formed a Japanese socialist group. The socialist movement in Japan appeared to have ground to a halt. Most socialists withdrew from public life. Some, following Katayama's lead, fled abroad; others retired to their home towns or villages. Several broke under the strain of regular police surveillance and went insane or committed suicide.

Yet, despite all kinds of difficulties, a small number of socialists continued to be active and managed to keep the movement alive. Osugi, Arahata, and Sakai, after completing their prison terms, lay low for

a while, but soon resumed publication of journals in order to spread socialist ideas. Yamakawa rejoined them in 1916. These four men played key roles in the development of revolutionary socialism in Japan. All four were at first devoted to the cause of anarcho-syndicalism and were instrumental in its gaining a prominent position in the revival of the labor and socialist movements that got under way near the end of World War I. Of the four, three—Sakai, Yamakawa, and Arahata—were converted to Marxism-Leninism (or communism), popularized its tenets, and were leaders in the Japanese Communist Party established in 1922. Osugi was the only one of the four to resist the communist tide; he adhered to anarcho-syndicalism until his brutal murder by the military police in 1923.

SAKAI, YAMAKAWA, ARAHATA, OSUGI

Sakai was born in Fukuoka Prefecture in 1870, the son of a minor samurai. After graduating from local middle school, he entered First Higher Middle School at Tokyo. His reputation among his classmates rested more on his social feats as a playboy and drinker than on his scholarship; however, his inclination to debauchery was later overcome by a happy marriage. He dropped out of school in 1889 and accepted a position teaching English at an Osaka primary school. He soon discovered that the life of a teacher was not suitable for him, and shifted to the profession of journalism. He worked for *Business News* (*Jitsugyo Shinbun*) in Tokyo, *Fukuoka News* (*Fukuoka Shinbun*) in Kyushu, and, after 1899, *Morning News* in Tokyo. At *Morning News* he made friends with Kotoku. Like Kotoku, Sakai's early political orientation was toward the Liberal Party, but he was soon attracted by ideas of social reform and by socialism, especially Marxism. Also like Kotoku, he was an ardent pacifist, and with him he left *Morning News* in October 1903, when, after conflict between Japan and Russia appeared likely, the paper became highly nationalistic and no longer tolerated expressions of pacifism. Sakai joined with Kotoku in 1903 to found the Commoners' Society (*Heiminsha*), and on November 15, 1903, they began publishing the weekly *Commoners' News*, which was dedicated to convincing the Japanese people of the horrors and folly of war. The new publication quickly became the center of the socialist movement, as Abe, Katayama, Kinoshita, Nishikawa, and others gave their support to it. However, the police continually interfered with the enterprise, banning issues and arresting the editors. Sakai, for ex-

ample, was charged with violating the Press Law in March 1904, and was sentenced to three months in jail. *Commoners' News* was ordered to cease publication. On appeal, the court reduced Sakai's sentence to two months and lifted the ban on *Commoners' News*. But police pressure ultimately took its toll: the paper closed down with the sixty-fourth issue in January 1905. Sakai became active in the Socialist Party, serving as its secretary and helping to put out the daily *Commoners' News* from January 1907 to April 1907, when, following its support of the riots at the Ashio copper mines, a Tokyo court ordered it to stop publication.

Sakai, like most socialists of his generation, could not overcome certain traditional characteristics. He took great pride in his knowledge of Marxism, which was greater than that of his comrades, and affected a professorial manner. He has been characterized by some as a *sensei*, or teacher, type. His family background and training in Confucian philosophy made him particularly conscious of the virtue of loyalty, and he tended to relate to people in the master-disciple (*sensei-deshi*) manner. Yet this stance was tempered by his warm personality; he was quick to make friends, and he kept them. He won their admiration because of his strong will and constancy. Moreover, they were attracted by his practical outlook. Although he was Marxist in orientation, he was not overly dogmatic, and tended to adjust his thinking to changing circumstances. Takabatake Motoyuki, the first Japanese socialist to publicize Lenin's ideas, and Arahata were particularly close to him. He was strong physically, enjoyed excellent health, and was active as a publicist and political leader until his death in 1933.

Yamakawa was born in Kurashiki in Okayama Prefecture in 1880. After attending local schools, he entered Doshisha University in 1895. He studied there for two years, was converted to Christianity, and then went to Tokyo, where, in 1897, he helped found the magazine *Gospel to Youth* (*Seinen no Fukuin*). However, he did not remain a Christian for long; he renounced his faith when Doshisha University submitted to the regulations of the Ministry of Education concerning the divinity of the emperor. His criticism of the imperial system soon got him into trouble with the authorities; the provocation was a derogatory piece that he wrote in 1900 on the marriage of the crown prince, the future Taisho emperor. He was tried and convicted of *lèse majesté*, sentenced to three and a half years in jail, and fined 120 yen. After serving his term, he returned to his home in Okayama and found employment as a clerk in a drug and medical supply store. He

went to Osaka in the fall of 1906 and joined the *Osaka Commoners' News* (*Osaka Heimin Shinbun*). In 1907 he moved to Tokyo, where he assisted in the publication of the daily *Commoners' News*, and founded the *Worker* (*Rodosha*) in 1908. He was arrested and sentenced to jail for short terms in 1907 and 1908.

Yamakawa, like Sakai, tended to assume the role of teacher, and ultimately came to look upon himself as a detached social critic. He also shared Sakai's realistic, practical outlook. His intellectual strength was in his knowledge of economics, which he studied while in jail. He did not, however, have Sakai's warmth. He was more self-assured and reserved, and has been described by some as a cool, even chilly man. He tended to be a strong moralist, which often did not endear him to his more easygoing friends. His prose, reflecting his personality, was larded with irony and cynicism. Although he suffered from poor health throughout most of his life, he lived to be seventy-eight, and was active as a publicist until his death in 1958.

Arahata was born in 1887, the son of the proprietor of a teahouse in the Tanmachi pleasure district of Yokohama. After completing primary school, he left home because he found his father's occupation distasteful. He worked for a time in a foreign trading firm, then at the Yokosuka Naval Dockyard, and finally in a bookstore. His interest in socialism was stimulated by *Commoners' News*, and in 1905 he volunteered to distribute socialist literature throughout the countryside. For him, socialism was comparable to a new religion, and, like many young men attracted to it, he was influenced by its air of martyrdom. He traveled through the rural areas in the manner of a missionary seeking converts and expecting persecution. Later in 1905 he took a job as a reporter on a small local newspaper published at Tanabe, where he continued to spread socialist ideas. At Tanabe he married Kanno Sugako, whom he later lost to Kotoku. He returned to Tokyo in 1906 and joined the group around Kotoku and Sakai. Arahata was a passionate, highly emotional man. He was deeply upset by his wife's affair with Kotoku, and attempted first to kill them both, and then to commit suicide. His second marriage, in 1910, was to a Yoshiwara prostitute. In contrast to Sakai and Yamakawa, he was at his best with ordinary people rather than with intellectuals. In 1929, after he was arrested in a mass roundup of suspected communists and released on bail, he again attempted suicide. He had prepared a note saying that he preferred death to persecution by the authorities. However, despite his avowed preference, he lived to the age of seventy-nine.

Osugi was born in 1885, the eldest son of an army major. He was educated at a military school in Nagoya, where he earned the reputation of being a bright but boisterous youngster. He was expelled from school because of his criticism of some of the officer-teachers, but continued his education at the Tokyo School of Foreign Languages, majoring in French. Having developed an interest in social problems, he joined the staff of the weekly *Commoners' News*. To many Japanese, he was the most colorful and dynamic radical in the socialist movement. He not only believed in anarchism, worshipping Max Stirner, Bergson, and Kropotkin, but convinced of the importance of developing one's individuality, tried to live completely free from the inhibiting values and customs of society. Like Stirner, Osugi regarded anarchism as a natural way of life. To him, civilization was a series of impediments and obstructions preventing man from realizing himself, and he would limit social action to voluntary association based on the principle of mutual aid. Osugi was hardworking, passionate, and loved adventure. He was an advocate of free love, and during one period maintained sexual relationships with three women, one of them Ito Naoe, who was murdered with him in 1923.

COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY TAKES HOLD

Osugi and Arahata were the first among the socialists to resume the dissemination of socialist ideas. They joined in October 1912 to publish *Modern Thought* (*Kindai Shiso*), a theoretical journal that was anarcho-syndicalist in orientation. It focused on a single theme—the role of labor unions in reforming society through direct action. They also organized the Syndicalist Study Group in July 1913. However, as before, they found the going difficult because of constant repression by the authorities. The police regularly banned issues of *Modern Thought*, until Osugi and Arahata were forced to halt publication in September 1914. But they did not desist from activity. They immediately began publishing the monthly *Commoners' News*, in which they shifted from basically theoretical concerns to criticism of Japanese society and its institutions. They were even less successful in this enterprise. The police banned all of the six issues that were printed through March 1915, and they were again forced to stop publication. (In the meantime, they had changed the name of the Syndicalist Study Group to the Society for the Support of the Common People.) Discouraged but persistent, they revived *Modern Thought*

in October 1915, but were able to turn out only four issues. They finally abandoned their joint effort in January 1916.

Sakai, meanwhile, began publishing *New Society* (*Shin Shakai*) in September 1915. He described his effort in the first issue as "the raising of a small flag on the tip of a worn-out fountain pen." Stating that he did not expect that a large uprising would result from the "battle cry" he was sounding, Sakai likened himself and his colleagues to a group of fugitives, loyal to a wretched but ambitious army, who had entrenched themselves in a mountain cave and had there devised a plan for holding out. "We have no plans to descend the mountain in the near future to attempt a counterattack on the enemy's front," he announced, "but in concert with like tribes of fugitives far and near . . . we are determined to wait our opportunity patiently."⁸ The first issue also included a commentary by Sakai on the materialist view of history and an article by Takabatake on the various schools of socialism. (With the help of Takabatake, Sakai formed a socialist study group in 1915.) At first, *New Society* had a very limited circulation, but it soon gained a considerable audience, particularly among intellectuals. It would be incorrect, however, to create the impression that revolutionary socialism had become a major force. Revolutionary socialists remained few in number, and their effective influence did not radiate much beyond the small groups associated with the publication and distribution of their journals. *New Society* did not escape police interference, but it managed to survive because it stuck to discussions of theory without direct application to Japan.

Yamakawa, who had left Tokyo after his release from jail, returned in 1916 to resume an active role in the socialist movement; in the following year he and Sakai reorganized *New Society*. Arahata also joined the staff. The basic orientation of the journal was anarcho-syndicalist, although by 1916 Sakai was showing signs of reverting to Marxian socialism. However, he had not reached the point of thinking seriously about the strategy and tactics of revolution in Japan. He did make an effort to propagate socialist ideas when he ran for the Diet in the April 1917 general election, with Takabatake as his campaign manager. The limited appeal of socialism was manifested in the fact that he won only 25 votes.

The Russian Revolution marked the beginning of the decline of anarcho-syndicalism in Japan, although this was not at all clear at the time. Japan's revolutionary socialists initially explained Lenin's triumph as a victory for anarchism. Yamakawa wrote to this effect in

New Society, and in order to criticize Marxism, he joined with Arahata in April 1918 to form the Labor Union Study Group (Rodo Kumiai Kenkyukai) and to publish *Blue Uniform (Aofuku)*, banned by the police in July. However, in 1919, they, together with Sakai, became champions of communism, although they could not completely divorce themselves from their anarcho-syndicalist backgrounds. As they studied developments in Russia in order to grasp "the realities of socialism," they came to believe that communism, which had proven successful as the foundation of the Russian Revolution, would provide more practical guidelines for achieving the socialist transformation of Japanese society than would anarcho-syndicalism. As yet, however, they were hardly conscious of the theoretical contributions of Lenin. The first article in Japan on Lenin's theories was "The Political Movement and the Economic Movement" by Takabatake, which appeared in the February 1918 issue of *New Society*. Takabatake made an important contribution to the Japanese understanding of Marxism by preparing a complete translation of *Capital*, which he began in 1919 and completed in 1924.

From 1919 on, Sakai, Yamakawa, and Arahata endeavored to spread Marxist, or bolshevist, ideas, especially among university students and, to a much lesser extent, among Japan's new labor leaders.* Because of the success of the Russian Revolution and the consolidation of Soviet power, their audiences became steadily larger and more receptive. They continued to publish *New Society*, and declared their conversion to bolshevism in the May 1919 issue. Later, in February 1920, they changed the name of the journal to *New Social Review (Shin Shakai Hyoron)* and began writing on the problems of Japanese society. They also published the more theoretical *Studies in Socialism* from April 1919 on. Arahata, who based himself in Osaka after the spring of 1920, took over the editing of *Japan Labor News (Nihon Rodo Shinbun)*, a monthly to which Sakai and Yamakawa contributed articles. These journals included articles on the Soviet Union and on the emerging international communist movement. For example, the July 1920 issue of *New Social Review* contained a report on the establishment of the Third International, based on material provid-

* Marxism was, of course, popularized by others, especially in university circles. One of its most prominent promoters was Professor Kawakami Hajime of Kyoto Imperial University, who began publishing *Studies on Social Questions (Shakai Mondai Kenkyu)* in January 1919 and who wrote many treatises on Marxism. Its ideas were also spread by new magazines like *Reconstruction (Kaizo)* and *Emancipation (Kaiho)*, both of which began publication in 1919.

ed by Katayama's socialist group in the United States. The issue of *Studies in Socialism* for the same month had a long article on the Soviet Union explaining the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Sakai, Yamakawa, and Arahata also formed study groups—Sakai, the Friday Society; Yamakawa, the Wednesday Society; and Arahata, the Labor and Liberty Society. They were also active as lecturers among student and labor groups, although they had to contend regularly with police interference. By 1920, all three were clearly committed to communism.

Sakai, Yamakawa, and Arahata were assisted in their efforts by Katayama, who had been converted to communism in the United States. Katayama had entered communist circles in New York in 1916, and, through contact with the Dutch socialist, S. J. Rutgers, had met Trotsky, Bukharin, and other Russian revolutionaries. Under their influence, he gave up his belief that socialism could be achieved in Japan under the existing political system, and called for revolution. The success of the Russian Revolution strengthened his commitment to communism; he saw in it the means to "liberate the oppressed masses of Japan." While his understanding of communism was always very elementary, he made up for his weakness in theoretical matters with his dedication. Pledging himself to work for the formation of communist parties in America and Japan and to support the objectives of the international communist movement, Katayama organized the communist-oriented League of Japanese Socialists in America. This group was composed largely of students and rootless immigrants and drifters, some of whom later became active in the socialist and revolutionary movements in Japan. Katayama remained active in the American communist movement in New York until 1921, when he traveled to Mexico on Comintern business,⁹ but he kept in close touch with his old socialist comrades-in-arms in Japan, sending them information about communism in exchange for news of events at home. In May 1919, he dispatched Kondo Eizo, a member of his New York group, to Japan to establish direct contact with Sakai and Yamakawa, as well as with Osugi and his followers.*

Osugi did not follow the path of his former colleagues and become a convert to Marxism, but instead became the leading champion of anarcho-syndicalism. In defending his ideas against the challenge of bolshevism, he formulated strategy and tactics that were much clearer

* Kondo's activities in Japan and his role in the establishment of the Japanese Communist Party in 1922 will be described in Chapter Two.

than anything put forward by his revolutionary opponents. He clung to the belief that direct action by free, independent labor unions was the only effective way to destroy capitalism and achieve socialism. In his view, the workers would have to liberate themselves from the exploitation of capitalism; they could not trust the intellectuals to lead them, because the intellectuals would not be willing to risk action. The basic tactic should be for labor unions to seize control of industries. As an anarchist, Osugi rejected the idea of reform: what he wanted was a total reconstruction of the human condition that would necessarily involve the eradication of social, economic, and political features of Japanese life that most Japanese had come to regard as permanent. At times, however, he grudgingly conceded that there were some immediate benefits to be derived from reforms that improved working conditions. Osugi rejected all forms of centralized power, whether of the state or of a national labor federation; to him, centralized power was the enemy of freedom and progress. The local autonomous union, based on the workshop or factory group, was the instrument through which to effect social change. But he could not ignore the need for some kind of coordination. Therefore, he advocated that labor unions be linked together through a system of free federation, each unit retaining its full rights, including the right to withdraw. He argued that free federation would make possible a full assault on capitalism, while protecting the worker from the evils of centralized, authoritarian power. The tactics of that assault would include slowdowns, strikes—especially the general strike—sabotage, violence, and, ultimately, mass revolution, in which all workers would participate. Osugi rejected the idea of political action by the labor movement. He was adamant in his view that the Diet could never be wrested from the hands of the capitalists, even with the establishment of universal suffrage, and maintained that the path of parliamentarianism led only to disillusionment and defeat. He even opposed efforts to obtain legislation recognizing labor unions and establishing collective bargaining, on the ground that such legislation would lead to moderation and reformism. He insisted the only path was that of direct action and revolution.

Osugi sought to spread his ideas through a steady stream of publications and lectures. He published the monthly *Cultural Review* (*Bunmei Hyoron*) from December 1917 to March 1918 and *Labor News* (*Rodo Shinbun*) from April 1918 until it was banned by the government in July. In October 1919, he and his followers founded the

monthly *Labor Movement* (*Rodo Undo*) "to advance the concept of a labor movement as an independent, autonomously operated movement run by the workers themselves." Osugi was, of course, in constant trouble with the police, and was kept under close surveillance by them. He gave lectures and held discussions in the Tokyo-Yokohama area under the most difficult conditions: the meetings were usually broken up or banned. In October 1918, he was arrested with Arahata for insisting upon the right of workers to form autonomous unions and to strike, remaining in jail until February 1919. He was arrested again in December 1919, and sentenced to three months in jail for violation of the Press Law. In June 1920, he was forced to suspend publication of *Labor Movement*.

THE DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT

The reemergence of the revolutionary left in 1916 coincided with a number of significant political and economic changes in Japanese society. New forces that challenged traditional values and modes of behavior emerged in the form of popular movements demanding that government be made responsible to the people through universal suffrage, and that capitalism be checked by recognition of labor's right to organize, bargain, and strike. In addition, Japan's narrow nationalism faced the challenge of a new spirit of internationalism fostered by the triumph of the Allies in World War I and the establishment of the League of Nations.

Politically, Japan was no longer dominated by the small group of civil and military bureaucrats, or *genro*, that had been the dominant force on the political scene since the inauguration of the cabinet system in 1885. (With the exception of the short-lived Okuma-Itagaki cabinet of 1898, the *genro* had monopolized the office of prime minister, and they or their subordinates had served as ministers of state.) The overturning of the Katsura regime in 1913 through the uncompromising opposition of the majority party in the Diet heralded the beginning of responsible cabinet government, and the appointment of Hara Takashi, president of the Seiyukai Party and majority leader in the lower house of the Diet, as prime minister in 1918 indicated a recognition of the power of political parties. Hara personified the new type of political leader that was coming to the fore as the influence of the *genro* began to wane, and as its ranks were depleted through death and advancing age. His accession to power did not, however,

symbolize the victory of democracy in Japan, since he brought to office something of the *genro*'s notion of stewardship. That he was not a democrat was clear from his opposition to universal suffrage.

The democracy movement, which centered on the demand for universal suffrage, was essentially confined to the academic world until the formation of the Terauchi cabinet in October 1916. That cabinet, with its army general-prime minister, appeared to represent a complete rejection of the principles of party politics and representative government, and criticism of it spread beyond the cloistered confines of university classrooms and discussion groups. The influential newspaper *Osaka Asahi*, for example, continually attacked Terauchi and his cabinet, denouncing them as "undemocratic," and demanding a "truly constitutional government based on democratic principles."¹⁰ The Rice Riots of 1918 transformed this criticism of the regime into a popular movement, based on a demand for universal suffrage. These riots were caused by the inflation that accompanied Japan's remarkable industrial expansion during World War I. Despite government efforts to stem rising prices, the price of rice had doubled from 1917 to 1918, and in August 1918, the wives of some fishermen raided the rice shops in Toyama Prefecture. Rice riots soon spread to all parts of Japan, and the government was forced to call out troops to quell them in 40 towns and cities. In the process, more than 100 demonstrators were killed. Although order was quickly restored, the unrest forced Terauchi's resignation in September 1918. Hara was his successor.

The intellectual leader of the democracy movement was Yoshino Sakuzo, professor of law at Tokyo Imperial University.¹¹ Yoshino called for a government based on the interests of the people—a government based on parties and universal suffrage, free from the influence of outside forces. He advocated the reform of the upper house of the Diet by the addition of elected members, the abolition of the Privy Council, the end of direct contact between the throne and the military, and the closing of civil positions to military officers. Yoshino saw no conflict between party government and imperial sovereignty because he believed both furthered the welfare of the people; he did not advocate popular sovereignty. In arguing for democratic reform, he pointed out that democracy had triumphed over the forces of militarism and conservatism in World War I, and that Japan must move toward democracy if she were to take her rightful place in the world.

With the strong support of university students and labor, the democracy movement reached its peak in 1919 and 1920 with mass dem-

onstrations in Tokyo, Kyoto, Nagoya, and Kobe. The climax came in February 1920, when 75,000 people rallied in Tokyo. However, Hara did not yield to this pressure. He had accepted an extension of the suffrage in 1919 by a reduction of the poll tax to three yen, which had increased the number of voters from one to three million, but he refused to endorse universal suffrage. When the opposition parties, the Kenseikai and the Kokuminto, introduced a universal suffrage bill in February 1920, he dissolved the Diet and called for new elections later that month. He and his party, the Seiyukai, won a smashing victory at the polls, which ended the drive for universal suffrage, at least for the time being.

The call for democracy was the stimulus for the rise of Japan's first student movement; the concerns of their professors became the battle cry of a new generation of students.¹² Yoshino and Fukuda Tokuzo, professor of economics at the Tokyo School of Commerce, formed the Dawn Society (Reimeikai) in December 1918, inviting faculty members at their own institutions and at Waseda University to join the struggle against "despotism and militarism." Yoshino called upon all professors and students "to become attuned to the new movement in world culture today—the movement for the emancipation of mankind—and to endeavor to promote it." He asked them also to take part "in the movement for national reform of present-day Japan." Some law students at Tokyo Imperial University, already members of the Universal Suffrage Study Society (Futsusenkyo Kenkyukai), which met at Yoshino's home, responded to his call in the same month. They formed the New Men Society (Shinjinkai) and dedicated themselves to work for the national reconstruction of modern Japan. Among its founders were Yoshino's son-in-law Akamatsu Katsumaro, Aso Hisashi, and Miyazaki Ryusuke; all later became active in the labor movement. At Waseda University, two professors sponsored the formation of the People's League (Minjinkai) in February 1919 to help "build a new, more rational society in Japan." These student groups and similar organizations at other universities were active in the democracy movement and campaigned vigorously for universal suffrage, often participating in rallies and demonstrations. For example, some 3,000 students from Tokyo Imperial, Waseda, Chuo, Nihon, and Meiji universities gathered at Hibiya Park in Tokyo on February 11, 1919, the thirtieth anniversary of the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution, and marched on the Diet, calling for universal suffrage.

The interests of these student groups were not confined to the political objectives of the democracy movement, however. From the beginning, their members were also concerned with economic and social problems. The breadth of their interests can be gauged from the pictures that appeared on the cover of *Democracy*, the journal of the New Men Society, published between March and December, 1919: Rousseau, Tolstoy, Marx, Kropotkin, Lincoln, Lazarus Zamenof (the creator of Esperanto), and Rosa Luxemburg. Motivated by strong humanitarian feelings and a sense of justice, they wanted a thorough reform of Japanese society for the benefit of all the people. They developed a sense of mission that exuded the energy and enthusiasm of youth. They were influenced by various schools of left-wing thought—social democracy, anarcho-syndicalism, and communism—but with the defeat of the universal suffrage bill in 1920, they became increasingly radical. This trend is apparent in *Democracy*, which underwent several reorganizations in 1920–21, becoming *Pioneer* (*Senku*) for six issues, *Comrade* (*Doho*) for eight, and *People* (*Narod*) for five. The journal reflected a growing emphasis on anarcho-syndicalism and revolutionary Marxism.* At Waseda University, because of clashes of personality, the People's League split into two groups in November 1919: the Builders' League (*Kensetsusha Domei*) and the Society of Enlightened People (*Gyominkai*), one of whose leaders was Takatsu Seido, who was later to be on the executive committee of the first Japanese Communist Party. Both groups became increasingly interested in socialism and organized themselves to spread its tenets not only among students but among workers and peasants as well. At Kyoto Imperial University, the Labor-Student Society had been established in July 1918; it looked to Professor Kawakami Hajime for leadership and was oriented toward Marxism. Some members of the student groups came under the influence of Sakai and Yamakawa and were later active in the illegal Japanese communist movement, e.g., Nosaka Sanzo, Sano Manabu, Koiwai Kiyoshi, and Kazahaya Yasoji. The majority of them, however, were later associated with the legal left.

* Akamatsu Katsumaro later characterized the change as follows: "Our groups fell away from the study of democratic theory and we lost our calmness. We now focused our attention on the discussion of how to lead the class struggle in Japan and of how to accomplish, at a single blow, the social revolution in Japan.... Socialism and anarchism became the topics of interest" (*Tenkanki no Nihon Shakai Undo* [Tokyo, 1926], pp. 188–89).

THE LABOR MOVEMENT

The accelerated pace of industrialization during World War I and the continuing urbanization provided conditions conducive to the development of a labor movement in Japan. From 1914 to 1919 the labor force in modern factories increased from 850,000 workers in 17,000 plants to approximately 1,800,000 in 44,000. The proportion of men in these totals also rose, reflecting a growing investment in heavy industry: male workers constituted one-third of the total in 1914 and one-half in 1919. In addition to the factory workers, about 450,000 men were employed in Japan's mines. Labor unions were formed throughout Japan; there were well over 100 by 1920. Their growth was stimulated largely by the wartime inflation. The price index of basic commodities rose by over 100 per cent from 1914 to 1919, but wages did not increase as rapidly, despite huge industrial profits. Labor disputes became common. There were 50 disputes and strikes in 1914 involving 8,000 workers, and 497 in 1919, involving 63,000. Like the Rice Riots of 1918, these disturbances were symptomatic of a deep and widespread unrest within the urban population.¹³

The second attempt to form a labor movement in Japan began in 1912, when Suzuki Bunji founded the Friendly Society, or Yuaikai, as a welfare organization for labor. Within a few years, Yuaikai evolved into a labor union federation dedicated to the principle of harmony between labor and capital based on equality, justice, and mutual respect. Suzuki, who remained as leader, was a Christian humanist who rejected the ideas of class struggle and revolution, and worked to achieve social reform by legal means. Yuaikai therefore emphasized cooperation and moderation in its efforts to improve the economic position of the working class. The organization grew slowly at first, but after 1914, with the expansion of Japan's factory labor force, its membership increased rapidly; by 1917, it comprised 32 branches with 27,000 members. Yuaikai became a heterogeneous, national organization representing various regional unions that were themselves made up of locals. These locals were primarily of two kinds—those grouping workers in the same general field and those linking workers from the same geographic area. Federations of locals were formed in Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe, and other cities, and these in turn were organized into regional units, i.e., Kansai and Kanto. By this time, Yuaikai began to play a more active role in seeking to improve the position of the workers, and Suzuki and the other leaders were increasingly involved in

disputes over wages and working conditions. The organization also began to develop a political orientation, and by 1916 was openly advocating repeal of Article 17 of the Public Peace Police Law, institution of universal suffrage, and passage of a law guaranteeing labor's right to form unions. The leaders of Yuaikai even went so far as to discuss the possibility of forming a labor party, but they did not act on the idea.

New and different kinds of labor leaders began to emerge in 1919 and 1920. Some of them were budding revolutionary Marxists, like Nosaka Sanzo and Watanabe Masanosuke. Nosaka had studied political economy at Keio University in Tokyo, where he became interested in socialism. He was a member of the New Men Society, and together with two of that society's founders, Akamatsu and Miyazaki, was a leader of Yuaikai's Labor-Student Society. After graduation from Keio in 1917, he formally joined Yuaikai, working in editorial and research capacities. Watanabe was a young factory worker who became associated with the New Men Society, and, with its help, organized the National (or "New Men") Celluloid Workers Union in Tokyo in 1919. Another new labor leader, Mizunuma Tatsuo, was typical of the anarcho-syndicalists in the labor movement. He argued for direct action by the workers, and fought against Marxist intellectuals because, he claimed, they inhibited pure labor leadership, supported centralized power, and refused to accept any system of autonomous unions. The communism of men like Nosaka and Watanabe represented the wave of the future, but Mizunuma's anarcho-syndicalism prevailed temporarily. Nishio Suehiro and Matsuoka Komakichi represented still another type of labor leader—those who had risen through the ranks of labor and were suspicious of all intellectuals and their emphasis on theory. Such leaders rejected the total approach of both the Christian humanists and the revolutionary socialists, Marxists and anarcho-syndicalists alike, and instead stressed immediate economic objectives. They were not concerned with political issues.

The old Yuaikai leadership, with its emphasis on Christian humanism, also underwent change, with new men like Kagawa Toyohiko coming into prominence. Kagawa, who emerged as the foremost labor leader in the Kansai region from 1919 to 1921, was a socialist who was attracted to the movement through his work as a Christian settlement worker in Kobe. He was dedicated to the principle of parliamentary democracy and looked to the achievement of socialism not by violence but by legal means. He rejected the concept of class struggle and op-

posed the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat because he believed it deprived men of all their freedom. Though basically a social democrat, Kagawa was constantly involved in labor disputes and strikes. In 1921 he used the profits from a book he wrote about life in the slums to help finance a Kawasaki Shipyard strike. Shortly thereafter, he became active in the emerging peasant movement, based on the discontent of impoverished tenant farmers.

The increasingly revolutionary orientation of Yuaikai became clear at its seventh convention, which opened on August 31, 1919. The idea of harmony between capital and labor began to give way to that of class struggle. The revolutionary socialists, especially the anarcho-syndicalists, criticized Yuaikai chairman Suzuki for being old-fashioned, and called for his removal. Though the moderates maintained their control, they were forced to establish a council of directors, selected by the convention, to share power with Suzuki. The anarcho-syndicalists and revolutionary Marxists attacked the concept of social reform, emphasizing the need for violent action. The platform approved by the convention reflected, in part, their growing influence. It attacked the evils of capitalism, demanded the liberation of wage slaves, and advocated the establishment of "a social system in which workers can receive the full benefits of culture, the guarantee of a livelihood, and a controlling power over their own environment, for the sake of the full development of their personalities and the humanization of society."¹⁴ The platform also proposed specific economic and political reforms including not only the eight-hour day and forty-eight-hour week, abolition of child and contract labor, a minimum wage system, equal pay for equal work, social insurance, accident compensation, and arbitration of labor disputes, but also universal suffrage, repeal of Article 17 of the Public Peace Police Law, and democratization of the educational system. Despite the objections of the anarcho-syndicalists, the moderates and the revolutionary Marxists persuaded the convention to approve of a centralized organization based on the principle of industrial unionism in place of the existing loose federation of heterogeneous local branches.

The economic boom of the war period gave way to depression in 1920. Business failures and unemployment mounted rapidly, with the result that labor was increasingly on the defensive: far from demanding higher wages and better working conditions, most unions struggled against wage cuts and discharges. The number of labor disputes decreased markedly, falling to only 280 in 1920; in most cases, these

were unsuccessful. Paradoxically, the position taken by Yuaikai became more radical. Its organ, *Labor (Rodo)*, emphasized the idea of class struggle and called for revolution against the capitalist system. With Hara's defeat of the universal suffrage bill, the cries of the anarcho-syndicalists grew even louder and more influential than before. Yuaikai's convention in October 1920 split over the issue of universal suffrage. Leaders like Suzuki and Kagawa refused to give up the idea of achieving social change through the Diet, but the anarcho-syndicalists argued that labor should have nothing to do with politics, and instead should rely on direct action to secure its objectives.

Anarcho-syndicalist strength probably reached its peak at this time. Its ideas were more and more popular among the masses of workers; compared to the theories of the revolutionary Marxists, they were romantic and easy to grasp. The anarcho-syndicalist base was in the Tokyo printing unions and among newspaper workers, especially the Printers Union Fraternal Society, or Shinyukai, and the True Progress Society, or Seishinkai. They also had support in the Tokyo Steel Workers Union and in the Kyoto unions of Yuaikai.

Despite their differences, the labor leaders sought to maintain as much unity as possible in the face of the deteriorating economic situation. In 1920, 15 unions, including Yuaikai and Shinyukai, and a number of socialist organizations planned a celebration of May Day for the first time in several decades. Some 5,000 workers gathered in Ueno Park and shouted approval of resolutions for the abolition of Article 17 of the Public Peace Police Law, the prevention of unemployment in time of depression, and the establishment of a minimum wage law. In their exuberance, many of them clashed with the police after the meeting was over, and the inevitable arrests were made. Heartened by this demonstration of labor solidarity, representatives of seven unions—Yuaikai, three moderate socialist unions, Shinyukai, Seishinkai, and the Marxist-oriented Enlightenment Society (Keimeikai), an embryonic teachers' union—agreed to the formation of a Labor Union League (Rodo Kumiai Domei). They felt that they shared enough concerns to act cooperatively, especially in combating the effects of the depression. However, their ideological differences were far too great to permit united action for long. The moderates worried about the growing radical tendency of the labor movement. They warned that clashing with the police was not the road to socialism and that direct action would only lead to disaster. Moreover, the formation of the league did not halt the attacks of the anarcho-syndicalists, who

continued to criticize the penchant of Yuaikai intellectuals for compromise, citing as an example a “humiliating settlement” made by union leader Aso Hisashi in a March 1921 dispute at the Ashio Copper Mine, when Aso halted the rioting of the workers and negotiated with management. The league floundered and finally collapsed after the moderates walked out of the 1921 May Day celebration in protest against the anarcho-syndicalists’ attempts to turn the mass meeting into a violent street demonstration.¹⁵ A similar effort to effect labor union cooperation in the Kansai area also failed.

THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE

Against this background of discord within the labor movement, the veteran socialists once again looked to the formation of a political organization, hoping to combine socialist ideas and the mass support of labor within the framework of a political party. Earlier, Sakai and Yamakawa had kept up a running barrage of criticism of Yuaikai in their journals. They attacked the theory of harmonization as hopelessly backward, and branded the organization as the tool of capitalism and government. However, they had to admit that Yuaikai was the only labor organization in Japan with some strength and promise, and as it began moving to the left, they became more hopeful about its possibilities. Katayama had attacked Yuaikai from New York, contributing anonymous pieces to the *International Socialist Review* and sending letters to friends in Japan that were published in *New Society*. He charged that Yuaikai had no workingmen among its leaders, that it deliberately excluded socialists, and that it supported a program proclaiming the interests of capital and labor to be identical.

Sakai, Yamakawa, and Arahata were prime movers in persuading a variety of socialists and labor leaders to join together to work for social revolution. They helped form the August League (Hachigatsu Domei) of 1920, which included Osugi, Aso, and Akamatsu, among others. This small group laid the groundwork for the establishment of a more broadly-based organization, the Socialist League (Shakai-shugi Domei). The Socialist League had a membership of some 1,000 by October, representing various schools of socialist thought, from the most moderate to the most radical, but the bolshevists tended to play the leading roles and set the tone. The Socialist League’s official organ was *Socialism* (*Shakaishugi*), which was dominated by Sakai, Yama-

kawa, and Arahata. The new journal, established in September 1920, was in reality only a continuation of their *New Social Review*.

A statement issued by the league summarized its principles:

We will destroy the present capitalistic system. We will destroy systems, organizations, customs, thoughts, arts, and other bourgeois culture that go with the capitalistic system. In order to create a truly human life, we are resolved to realize a society without wealth and poverty, a society in which all people work and all people receive security of food, clothing, and housing. We are resolved to realize a society of liberty, a society of equality, a society of peace, a society of justice, and a society of friendship throughout the world and mankind. . . .

We believe that our main power in this class conflict lies in . . . the worker class, and we will struggle for their awakening, unification, and training.

We also hope and believe that the salaried class, the small entrepreneurs . . . who, while superficially or formally the middle class, are basically workers, will come to participate in our movement generally as the proletarian class.¹⁶

The Socialist League found the going difficult because the police harassed it constantly, dissolving six preparatory meetings between August and November, and disrupting its inaugural convention of 200 members in Tokyo on December 9. When the league's sponsors tried to hold another public meeting the following day, the police again intervened, this time arresting 53 participants. Thereafter, since the league had no organizational structure, its member groups simply continued their propaganda and "educational" activities much as they had before. The leading organs of the revolutionaries continued to be *Studies in Socialism* and *Socialism*, under the direction of Sakai and Yamakawa, Arahata's *Japan Labor News*, and Osugi's *Labor Movement*. However, there was little unity in the efforts of the bolsheviks and the anarcho-syndicalists; in fact, there was increasing conflict between them. Nevertheless, despite this growing hostility, the sponsors of the Socialist League attempted to hold a second public convention on May 9, 1921. Some 3,000 persons attended, but the police banned the meeting. On May 28, the government, acting under the authority of the Public Peace Police Law, ordered the organization to disband.

Short-lived as it was, the Socialist League was significant for several reasons. First, it played an important role in the popularization of radical thought. Even after its dissolution, its members continued to work actively in their small groups, and their efforts, extending

throughout the entire country, helped to make clearer the distinctions among the various schools of left-wing thought. Second, the league brought together the older bolshevists and a new generation of young socialists, largely university students and recent graduates. Third, it increased the contact between the left-wing intellectuals, young and old, and the labor leaders, with the result that the left-wing movement began to be transformed from a movement based primarily on isolated intellectual groups into one with some popular support.

The failure of the league was in part due to a fundamental weakness that would continue to plague the Japanese left wing and hamper its efforts to resist those in authority. That weakness was a lack of unity. Even if the attitude of the authorities had been different, the league was probably doomed to failure because of the disparity of ideological and personality groupings within it. None of these groups could properly be called an organization, and except for the anarcho-syndicalists, none had worked out action programs. The social democrats, while advocating the strategy of reform through legal means to achieve specific objectives, had no political weapons to use in their struggle against the existing order. The revolutionary Marxists talked in terms of class struggle and revolution, as did the anarcho-syndicalists, but they had no strategy and tactics to achieve Marxist goals. They lacked a clear understanding of Leninism, especially as it was developing in the international communist movement. Moreover, some of them, like Yamakawa, were still influenced by their anarcho-syndicalist background; this was especially apparent in their refusal to consider universal suffrage and utilization of the Diet as effective means for achieving social change. The repressive power of the state, of course, prevented these groups from developing organizational cohesion and therefore worked against the formulation of strategy and tactics.

THE COMINTERN LOOKS EASTWARD

Despite the Soviet leaders' early preoccupation with "imminent revolution in Europe," they had turned their attention to Asia as well. They convened the First Congress of Communist Organizations of the East in Moscow in November 1918. The scope of the congress was limited, however, because most of the 40-odd "Eastern" delegates came only from central Asia. Japanese socialists were invited to attend, but

no Japanese representative was able to make the long and difficult journey. However, a Dutch delegate, S. J. Rutgers, read a “message from Japan,” voicing opposition to the Japanese intervention in Siberia earlier in the year. Rutgers, who had befriended Katayama and brought him into the communist network in New York, had visited with Sakai and other Japanese socialists in Tokyo on his way to Russia. It may have been due to his efforts that the congress included a section on Japanese affairs in a resolution calling for the establishment of a Department of International Propaganda.

In December, Lenin and his colleagues decided to organize the Third International, and issued invitations to 39 communist and other left-wing political parties and organizations throughout the world to attend the first congress in March 1919. They designated Katayama as the representative of the socialist groups in Tokyo and Yokohama, but he was unable to attend.¹⁷ The Soviet leaders convened a Second Congress of Communist Organizations of the East at Moscow in November 1919, at which Lenin advised the delegates “to adapt communist theory and practice to conditions where the bulk of the people are peasants.” He called on them “to fight not against capital, but against medieval remnants,” urging them to ally themselves with the bourgeoisie against their common enemies—the feudal exploiters and the Western imperialists. Again, no Japanese delegates attended, although a written report was forwarded from Japan, presumably by Yamakawa, and was published in the congress proceedings.¹⁸

When the frontal attack against capitalism in Europe failed, the Comintern leaders focused more attention on Asia. They reasoned that nationalist and communist movements there would sap the strength of European capitalism and eventually lead to its destruction. In his theory of imperialism, Lenin contended that the surplus profits derived from the exploitation of colonies and backward areas enabled the European capitalists to maintain their “industrial wage slaves” above the starvation level, and thereby helped to postpone the inevitable revolution. If these profits were taken away, and the colonies freed, the workers at home would rise in revolt. (This strategy was aimed particularly at Great Britain, which had greater interests in Asia than any other power.) Thus, the initial Comintern approach to Asia, and especially to China, was to seek allies who, by fighting imperialism, would advance the proletarian revolution in Europe, as well as relieve capitalist pressure on the Soviet Union.

The basic strategy for Asia was determined at the Second Congress of the Comintern in August 1920, which approved Lenin's "Theses on the National and Colonial Question." According to Lenin,

The Communist International should form temporary understandings, even alliances, with the bourgeois democracy of the colonies and backward countries, but not merge with it, unconditionally preserving the independence of the proletarian movement, even in its most embryonic form. . . . We, as communists, must and will support bourgeois emancipation in colonial countries only when, in those areas, these movements are really revolutionary, when their representatives will not hinder us in educating and organizing the peasantry and the large masses of the exploited in the revolutionary spirit.¹⁹

Lenin made a clear distinction between the revolutionary nationalist movements, which would fight imperialism to the end, and bourgeois nationalist movements, which, he warned, would try to compromise with imperialism.

Lenin also emphasized that the anti-imperialist struggle was only part of the process of the ultimate communization of Asia:

The revolution in the colonies is not going to be a communist revolution, in its first stages. But if, from the outset, the leadership is in the hands of a communist vanguard, the revolutionary masses will not be led astray, but may go ahead through successive periods of development of revolutionary experience. . . . In the first stages, the revolution in the colonies must be carried on with a program that will include many petty bourgeois reform clauses, such as the division of land, etc. But from this it does not follow that the leadership of the revolution will have to be surrendered to the bourgeois democrats. On the contrary, the proletarian parties must carry on vigorous and systematic propaganda for the soviet idea and organize the peasants' and workers' soviets as soon as possible.

The policy advocated by Lenin was clearly geared to colonies and exploited areas like China. Lenin did not take a position on Japan until November 1920, when he spoke to a meeting of key secretaries of the Moscow branch of the Russian Communist Party. On that occasion he stated that war between the United States and Japan was inevitable, and that the stronger capitalism of the United States would deprive the weaker capitalism of Japan of all its plunder.²⁰ But he made no effort to analyze Japanese society or to develop strategy and tactics of revolution for it.

From 1920 on, the Comintern expanded its efforts to stimulate establishment of communist parties in Asia, and to shape their strategy

and tactics in accordance with Moscow orthodoxy. During the Congress of the Peoples of the East, which was hastily convened at Baku in September 1920, the Comintern leaders urged the representatives of the eastern nations to rise and unite with the revolutionary workers of the West in "a holy war under the red banner of the Communist International."²¹ (The only Japanese present at this congress was Yoshiwara Gentaro, reportedly a member of the Industrial Workers of the World, who had gone to Moscow on his own initiative.) Earlier that year, in April, Gregory Voitinsky, I. K. Mamev, and Yang Ming-chai had arrived in China as representatives of the Far Eastern secretariat of the Comintern's executive committee. Comintern agents were now in a position to make direct contact with revolutionary socialists in Japan.

From Communist Group to Communist Party, 1920-1922

The Comintern made its first attempt to establish direct contact with Japanese leftists late in the summer of 1920. Its agents in Shanghai sent a Korean, Yi Ch'un-suk, a recent graduate of Chuo University in Tokyo and former vice-minister of military affairs in the Korean provisional government of Shanghai, to meet with Japanese bolshevists and anarcho-syndicalists and to extend an invitation to several of them to attend a conference of "Far Eastern revolutionaries" to be held in the fall in Shanghai.¹ Yi arrived just at the time that the leading left-wing radicals in Japan had agreed, despite their ideological differences, to join forces in the creation of the Socialist League. Sakai and Yamakawa listened politely to Yi's overtures but declined his invitation. Not only were they reluctant to trust him, but they also worried about arousing the suspicions of the police. The less cautious Osugi was willing to run risks in order to establish contacts with revolutionaries abroad, and though he was still outspokenly critical of the Soviet regime, he accepted Yi's invitation and secretly left Japan for Shanghai in October.

At Shanghai, Osugi conferred for several days with Comintern agents and Chinese and Korean revolutionaries. The central theme of these discussions was the feasibility of establishing a league of Far Eastern revolutionary parties to be directed by the Comintern. True to his convictions as an anarcho-syndicalist, Osugi argued for the autonomy of each national movement and would agree only to the creation of an international liaison committee. He did, however, want Comintern financial support for his publishing activities, and asked for 10,000 yen for a half year. The Comintern agents gave him 2,000 yen and promised additional funds later, provided that he cooperate with the Japanese bolshevists and visit Soviet Russia.² They evidently hoped to make a convert of him.

Osugi returned to Japan in November, apparently willing to make common cause with the bolshevists, at least to the extent of attacking capitalism through the publication of a new weekly. But he was willing to cooperate with them only as long as he remained free to criticize their ideas and to act independently. When Sakai and Yamakawa did

not respond favorably to his proposal for cooperation, he joined forces with Katayama's protégé, Kondo Eizo, and student activist Takatsu Seido to resume publication of *Labor Movement*, which had been suspended the previous June. The first issue of the weekly appeared at the end of January 1921.

Osugi did not change his own ideological position, but Kondo and Takatsu were allowed to use the magazine to write in support of communism and the Soviet regime. Osugi continued to hammer away at the theme that the emancipation of the workers had to be achieved by the workers themselves, because the intellectual leadership of the labor movement could not be trusted. Moreover, he remained convinced that the bolsheviks represented a greater threat to the labor movement than did the social democrats. He wrote numerous editorials and articles in *Labor Movement* attacking both groups, but his bitterest barbs were directed at Sakai and Yamakawa. He was also sharply critical of the Russian communists, and called for the overthrow of the Soviet regime. In sum, he was an unlikely candidate for conversion to the communist cause, and the Comintern soon gave up on him. Osugi was forced to borrow money to continue publication of *Labor Movement* because the Comintern's Shanghai agents did not send additional funds, and he canceled the proposed trip to Russia because of illness.³

The Comintern sent another Korean, Yi Chung-rim, to Japan in April 1921, in a second attempt to establish contact with left-wing leaders. Yi, who had been a student at Meiji University, first approached Osugi, but was put off by his intransigence. He then turned to Yamakawa, probably on the advice of Kondo, and found him receptive to the Comintern's overtures for cooperation. Yamakawa, disillusioned by the failure of the Socialist League and urged by Kondo to organize a communist party, was ready to accept Soviet support and was agreeable to the establishment of "a Japanese branch of the Comintern." To impress the Shanghai bureau with his sincerity, he collaborated with Kondo, who along with Takatsu was ready to break with Osugi, in drafting regulations and a platform for a "communist preparatory committee." Yamakawa and Kondo quickly completed their work and showed it to Sakai, who expressed his approval. (Kondo later stated that he approached Yamakawa rather than Sakai or Arahata because Sakai still had social democratic tendencies, and Arahata was under the influence of anarcho-syndicalism. "I saw," Kondo said, "that Yamakawa was a complete bolshevik.")⁴

The first step toward the establishment of a Japanese communist

party was taken when Yamakawa and Sakai joined with three other veteran socialists—Arahata, Hashiura Tokio, and Yoshikawa Morikuni—and with Kondo, Takatsu, and Watanabe Mitsuzo of the Watchmakers Union to organize a so-called “communist group.” (Whether or not Osugi was asked to participate is doubtful; however, one of his followers, Kondo Kenji, was invited and refused.) Sakai was elected chairman of the group, and the others became members of its “executive committee.” Yamakawa explained the regulations and platform that he had worked out with Kondo, and the committee adopted them unanimously. It should be emphasized that, notwithstanding these activities, the group had no intention of forming a political party at this time. As Arahata has made clear, decisions were confined to the matter of “establishing a communist propaganda group.”⁵ The group was interested not in political activity but in spreading ideas. Nevertheless, Sakai and the executive committee members overcame their reluctance to establish direct relations with the Comintern: they responded to the Comintern’s overtures by dispatching Kondo as their representative to a meeting at Shanghai. (He made the trip under the alias of George Tani, a Nisei merchant born in Los Angeles who owned a shop in New York.)

KONDO EIZO AND THE ENLIGHTENED PEOPLE’S COMMUNIST PARTY

Kondo met with Korean and Chinese revolutionaries and Comintern representatives at Shanghai in May 1921, and gave them an analysis of the left-wing movement in Japan. Like many of the left-wing Japanese, he tended to exaggerate the prospects of the movement. Osugi was discussed, and according to Kondo, Pak Chin-sun, a Korean who was the conference leader and a Comintern representative sent from Moscow, ruled out the possibility of further cooperation with him. Pak was opposed to Osugi because the latter had not only retained his anarcho-syndicalist views, but had asserted that if there were outside interference in Japanese affairs, he would not accept financial aid.* The possibility of Yamakawa attending the forthcoming Third Congress of the Comintern scheduled for the summer of 1921

* Osugi later wrote that he wanted to cooperate with the Comintern and that he sent Kondo to Shanghai to renew contact with agents of the Comintern and get the money that had been promised. He charged that Sakai, Yamakawa, Kondo, and Takatsu plotted to exclude the anarcho-syndicalists from their activities (Osugi, pp. 33–35). According to Kondo, the Comintern severed ties with Osugi because he refused to change his views (Kondo, p. 109). Arahata has concluded that the Comintern preferred to work with the “bolshevists” (Arahata, *Sa no Menmen*, p. 165).

at Moscow was also discussed. Kondo reported that Yamakawa was hardly strong enough to go to Shanghai, let alone to undertake an arduous journey across Siberia. He promised to suggest to the Japanese group that he himself and another delegate attend the congress. Finally, Kondo asked the Comintern agents for 20,000 yen a month to finance the communist group's organizational and propaganda activities, but they replied that they would first have to take up the matter with Moscow. However, he did receive 6,500 yen (5,000 in American currency and 1,500 in Japanese) shortly before his departure for Japan. This sum was to be divided as follows: 5,000 yen for expenses in connection with the communist movement, 1,000 yen for Kondo's personal expenses, and 500 yen as a gift for Osugi for medical expenses.⁶ The money for Osugi was presumably to keep the relations between him and Kondo smooth, and to terminate the Comintern ties with him gracefully.⁷ (Kondo insisted he delivered the money to Osugi at Kamakura, but Osugi claimed that he received only 200 yen.)⁸

Kondo's mission came to an unexpected and abrupt end. After his disembarkation at Shimonoseki, he missed his train, and weary of waiting for the night express, he got drunk and became involved with a prostitute. His conduct aroused the suspicion of the police, and he was arrested and jailed when he could not account for the large amount of money that he was carrying. Through Kondo's cellmate, the police learned of Kondo's activities at Shanghai, and of his association with Sakai and Yamakawa. Kondo insisted, however, that he was acting alone. Ultimately, the police were forced to release him, and he was allowed to take the funds with him simply because there was no specific law to apply to the case.⁹ According to Kondo's account of the affair, he had to promise not to use the money for secret political activities.¹⁰

After Kondo was released by the police in July, he became obsessed with a desire to organize a communist party. He first approached Sakai and Yamakawa with the idea of transforming the "communist group" into a political party, but they rejected the notion. Having recently suffered through the experience of the dissolution of the Socialist League in May, they were understandably cautious. They adopted a wait-and-see attitude, and were content for the time being to remain members of a "propaganda group." Moreover, they did not want to have much contact with Kondo in view of his arrest and detention, and would not touch the funds that he had brought from Shanghai.

Deciding to strike out on his own, Kondo turned to a group of young

militant intellectuals, for the most part Waseda University graduates and members of the Society of Enlightened People who were impatient with what they regarded as the tendency of Yamakawa and Sakai to be content with mere theorizing. They formed the core around which Kondo organized the Enlightened People's Communist Party (Gyomin Kyosanto). At a secret meeting in Tokyo on August 20, a small group of these radical intellectuals adopted a party constitution and platform, elected Kondo chairman of an executive committee, and established committees for propaganda, publication, investigation, and finance, under Takatsu, Takase Kiyoshi (Sakai's son-in-law), Hirata Shinsaku, and Nakasone Genwa, respectively. Within a month the party began distributing handbills and tracts that were designed to incite workers, students, soldiers, and peasants in and around Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe to join the class struggle. Meanwhile, to strengthen his ties with the Comintern and to get more funds,* Kondo dispatched Shigeta Yoichi, a young Waseda University student, to Shanghai with a detailed report of the party's activities and some "theses" (which Kondo later claimed were written by Yamakawa) concerning the party's future plans.¹¹

In the "official history" of the Japanese Communist Party, the Enlightened People's Communist Party is not recognized as a legitimate predecessor.¹² The party's career was short-lived, largely because its central leadership was so committed to immediate and drastic revolutionary action. Party propaganda posters appeared in early October,[†] and the police began to investigate soon after, even sending a detective to Shanghai. They made their first arrests on October 12, when they caught six party members distributing revolutionary materials on the streets, but the fatal blow fell a month later. After party members had distributed antimilitary and antiwar handbills among soldiers assembled for large-scale army maneuvers in the Tokyo area, the police again went into action. On November 25 they arrested Kondo's envoy, Shigeta, and a Comintern agent traveling with him under the name of B. Grey on their arrival at Yokohama from Shanghai.[‡] Grey was carry-

* Japanese government sources claim that in July 1921 a Chinese brought funds for Kondo from Comintern agents at Shanghai (see Ministry of Justice, *Shiho Kenkyu*, December 1935, pp. 182–83; and Arahata, *Kyosanto*, pp. 11–12, 14).

† Arahata and his friends regarded the party's propaganda activities as a "receipt for the funds that Kondo received at Shanghai" (*Kanson Jiden*, p. 285). In an interview with Scalapino on October 12, 1957, Yamakawa asserted that Kondo told Sakai the posters were his receipts for Comintern money (cited in Scalapino's unpublished manuscript on the history of the Japanese labor movement).

‡ The Japanese police ultimately identified Grey as an Englishman born in Moscow and married to a Russian. He began working for the Comintern in 1920, serving in East Asia, for the most part (Scalapino, manuscript on the Japanese labor movement).

ing 7,000 yen for Kondo from the Comintern, and had a notebook with the names of his Japanese contacts. Under questioning, the two men admitted the purpose of their trip. Shigeta was held for trial, while Grey's funds were confiscated and he was expelled from the country on December 4. The police also arrested Kondo on November 25 and discovered additional information relating to the party. The complete collapse of the party came within a week, when the police rounded up some 40 of its members and supporters and charged them with violating the Publications Law and the Public Peace Police Law.¹³ Among those ultimately tried and convicted were Kondo, who was sentenced to ten months in jail, and Takatsu, who was sentenced to eight months. Sakai and Yamakawa were also among those arrested, but they denied any complicity and were released.

THE THIRD CONGRESS OF THE COMINTERN

Kondo was unable to keep his promise to attend the Third Congress of the Comintern held at Moscow from June 22 to July 12, but there were two Japanese present—Yoshiwara Gentaro and Taguchi Unzo. Yoshiwara, a participant in the Japanese socialist group in the United States and a member of the American branch of the Industrial Workers of the World, had taken part in the Congress of the Peoples of the East held at Baku in September 1920. Taguchi was also from the United States; he had been designated by Katayama Sen, in accordance with Comintern instructions, to attend as the representative of the Japanese group in America.

The Third Congress of the Comintern convened in an atmosphere of disappointment, largely because the communist revolutionary movement had failed to achieve success outside Russia. The Comintern leadership was cautious and emphasized the need for communist parties to make serious preparations before attempting to seize power. It had been the purpose of the Second Congress to create communist parties that would join the international communist movement. The hope had been to break existing parties away from their reformist leaders with the result that the laboring masses would flock to the new and purified leadership. However, this expectation was not fulfilled: the Third Congress's theses on "The World Situation and Our Tasks" admitted that the greater part of the working class still stood outside the sphere of communist influence.

The Third Congress defined the major tasks of the Comintern as winning the "exclusive support of the majority of the working classes"

and drawing the most active part of that majority into a direct struggle against the bourgeoisie. The congress resolution on tactics spoke directly to these points:

From the first day of its foundation the Communist International made it clearly and unequivocally its task not to create small communist sects that would strive to establish their influence over the working masses only through agitation and propaganda, but to participate directly in the struggle of the working masses, to establish communist leadership in this struggle, and to create in the process of struggle large, revolutionary, communist mass parties.¹⁴

Karl Radek, one of the leading members of the Comintern, proclaimed the watchword of the congress: "First and foremost, to the masses, by every means." (His injunction was not a novel one; the Second Congress had proclaimed the slogans "Penetrate the Masses" and "A Closer Link With the Masses.") Radek called for the utilization of all the bourgeois freedoms and institutions, however limited they might be, to reach the masses. The two major slogans adopted by the congress were "Advance Into the Masses" and "Advance Toward a Political Struggle."¹⁵

The Comintern sought to strengthen the bonds of organization and discipline between it and the national parties: Chapter VII of the theses entitled "Organizational Structure of the Communist Parties—The Methods and Contents of Their Work" emphasized that a communist party "is under the leadership of the Communist International," and that the "directives and decisions of the International are binding upon the party, and also, it is evident, upon each member of the party." However, this emphasis by the Comintern on discipline was in conflict with its recommendation of policies having mass appeal: increased discipline would require greater centralization of authority at a time when the national parties needed more autonomy, not less.¹⁶

The major concerns of the congress were still quite clearly related to Europe. It devoted little time to consideration of the situation in Asia. There was only one session on Asia during the congress, a hurried one on the last afternoon, when the delegates from Asian countries made brief speeches limited to five minutes each. The delegates from China, Korea, and Japan devoted themselves in the main to the denunciation of Japanese imperialism. Furthermore, an immense report by Comintern chairman Gregory Zinoviev on the work of the

Comintern's executive committee during the year—a report that takes up some 60 pages of the printed record of the congress proceedings—contains only three elliptical sentences on the subject: “In the Near East the council of propaganda created by the Baku Congress is working. From the point of view of organization, however, much remains to be done. In the Far East the situation is similar.”¹⁷ (Zinoviev, however, did comment specifically on the importance of Japan in the world communist movement. He declared: “It is essential that we should have better communication with Japan; we must secure a firm foothold [there]. The situation in that country is about the same as that of Russia on the eve of 1905. There is a strong revolutionary movement of the masses.”)¹⁸

Though Asian affairs were barely discussed at the congress, the Comintern established committees that held meetings on Asian matters. Taguchi served as a member of a subcommittee that met under the chairmanship of Radek to discuss a number of East Asian questions. During a session on Japan, the two men clashed over policy for the Japanese labor movement. Radek argued that the Japanese labor movement was in an early stage of development and should increase the political consciousness of the masses through a moderate campaign for universal suffrage, while Taguchi contended that the movement was developing rapidly, forcing it into revolutionary actions. (Taguchi, like many left-wing Japanese, tended to exaggerate in order to impress Comintern officials.) In the end, the subcommittee took the position that the Japanese labor movement was still strongly influenced by anarcho-syndicalism and was weak in political consciousness. The Japanese “comrades” were urged to strengthen the movement’s political consciousness and, “on the basis of a mass foundation,” to prepare it for a political struggle, or “a political change of direction.”¹⁹

In addition to participating in the Third Congress of the Comintern, Taguchi and Yoshiwara took part in the inaugural congress of the Red International of Labor Unions, commonly called the Profintern, which was held in July 1921. The Comintern organized this new body in order to pursue the objective of winning national unions away from the International Federation of Trade Unions, which had been reorganized in 1919 at a conference in Amsterdam and was led by European social democrats. At the Third Congress, Zinoviev had attacked the IFTU as “the last barricade of the international bourgeoisie” and had suggested the tasks to be considered by the First Congress of the Profintern: “To organize better the struggle against

the yellow Amsterdam International,” “to define in a practical way the relations between the revolutionary labor unions and parties in each country,” and “to formulate precisely the relation between the Red Labor Union Council and the Communist International.”²⁰ The Profintern congress, attended by 380 delegates from 41 countries, approved Zinoviev’s suggestions, and, despite the opposition of syndicalist delegates, called for “the closest possible link with the Third International.” This link was to be secured by an interchange of delegates between the Profintern council and the executive committee of the Comintern, and by joint sessions of the two bodies. The congress also called for a “revolutionary unity” between the Red labor unions and communist parties in all countries.²¹ The main business of the Profintern congress was essentially European, as was to be expected; however, some attention was paid to Asia. The congress adopted a resolution urging “the workers of the Near and Far East” to “enter the ranks of the Red International of Labor Unions.”²² The interest of the Profintern in Asia, which contrasted with the exclusive European orientation of the IFTU, or Amsterdam International, proved to be important later.

THE FAR EASTERN PEOPLES’ CONGRESS

The Comintern was forced to take greater interest in the Far East when the American government announced that a conference of nine powers, not including Soviet Russia, would be held in Washington to discuss naval disarmament and Far Eastern questions in general. The initial Soviet reaction was to call an “East Asian Conference of China, Mongolia, the Siberian Far Eastern Republic and the Soviet Republic.” This did not prove practicable, however, especially in view of China’s acceptance of the American invitation,²³ so the Soviet leadership fell back on a Comintern plan, formulated after the Baku Congress, to hold a “Congress of Peoples of the Far East” in a Siberian city. The Comintern’s executive committee declared that it would convene at Irkutsk a “simultaneous conference of representatives of Eastern revolutionary movements and thus indicate the strength of Eastern opposition to imperialist plans in the East.” It defined the right of participation as follows: “Every national-revolutionary socialist or communist organization has the right to be represented at the Congress of the Peoples of the Far East.”²⁴ The invitation, drafted by Chang T’ai-lei, a young Chinese professor, read as follows:

Comrades of Korea, China, Japan, and Mongolia! The last word is with you. Join your forces with the world struggle of liberation that was started in the never-to-be-forgotten days of four years ago by the Russian proletariat. . . . On November 11, 1921, a surgical operation, known as the Washington Conference, will be performed upon the peoples of the Far East. It is on that day that we will convene a Congress of the Toilers of the Far East in Irkutsk, the purpose of which is to unite the toilers of the East in the face of a new danger. Our slogans are: "Peace and Independence of the Country," "Land to Those Who Till It," "Factories to the Workers."²⁵

After completing his work in Moscow, Taguchi went to Irkutsk to join the planning committee for the Far Eastern Congress. (What happened to Yoshiwara is not known; he may have remained at Moscow as the Japanese representative to the Profintern.)* Some preliminary meetings of Asian radicals were convened in November, but the response to the Comintern's invitation was so great that the site of the congress, known popularly as the Far Eastern Peoples' Congress, was shifted to Moscow and rescheduled for January 1922.

Meanwhile, the Comintern had renewed its contact with the bolsheviks and anarcho-syndicalists in Japan. Early in the autumn of 1921, Voitinsky sent Chang T'ai-lei to Tokyo to persuade the various left-wing groups to send delegates to the Far Eastern Peoples' Congress. The persuasive young professor was successful in his mission. Yamakawa and his close associates selected Tokuda Kyuichi, an energetic member of the Wednesday Society, to represent them. (Tokuda later claimed he was selected because of the dangers involved; Watanabe Haruo states that Sakai and Yamakawa chose Tokuda because they did not want to send a close associate.)²⁶ Kondo and the Enlightened People's Communist Party elected to send Takase, the chairman of the party's publication committee. Two anarchists—Yoshida Hajime and

* Yoshiwara's role during these years is not clear. Kondo suspected that he may have been an agent of the Japanese government and responsible for the police's knowledge of the activities of the Enlightened People's Communist Party. In 1922, Yoshiwara was sent by the Profintern to Japan to organize unions, but according to Kondo, he claimed that precious gems given to him for this purpose were stolen by a thief (Kondo, p. 166). Yoshiwara accompanied Arahata on a trip to Peking in December 1922 to confer with Adolph Joffe. Yoshiwara claimed that he had been asked by the Amur River Society to negotiate the purchase of northern Sakhalin from Russia. Upon his return to Japan, he began to associate with right-wing groups. Arahata, who has described Yoshiwara as "an unreliable and stupid person," states that when he was in jail in 1937, Yoshiwara was brought in drunk and boasted that he had been a Comintern agent disguised as a right winger (Arahata, *Sa no Menmen*, pp. 175–79). See also Watanabe Haruo, *Nihon Marukusushugi*, p. 101, and Ministry of Justice, *Shuppanho*, pp. 2–3.

Wada Kiichiro—and three “revolutionary” printing workers completed the group. Osugi has claimed that he was invited but declined.²⁷

The small party of Japanese delegates proceeded first to Shanghai and then to Irkutsk, where they joined other Far Eastern national groups in the preliminary conference in November. The conference was divided into Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Mongolian sections, but the general tone was created at the single plenary session, when Chang T'ai-lei delivered the keynote address, stating: “Our union is not measured by the strength of the fleet or of imperialist armies, but by the fact that in the country where the landlord and capitalist have been overthrown, the representatives of the toilers of the East have gathered to protest against the mean comedy known as the Washington Conference, and also to work out a plan for joint struggle.”²⁸

From Irkutsk, the Japanese group journeyed to Moscow and then to Petrograd, where they joined the Japanese representatives from the United States—Watanabe Haruo, Maniwa Suekichi, Nonaka Masayuki, Nikaido Umekichi, and Suzuki Mosaburo—to constitute the full Japanese delegation to the congress. Katayama arrived from Mexico in December, and he and Taguchi were designated conference officers. Katayama, along with Lenin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Stalin, received the title of honorary chairman; it was soon apparent that the Russian leaders expected him to be useful in advancing the communist cause in Asia. Also in Moscow at the time were Nosaka Sanzo, who had come from Paris to attend a meeting sponsored by the Profintern;²⁹ Morito Tatsuo, a young socialist intellectual, and Kushida Tamizo of the Ohara Research Institute on Social Problems, both of whom had been invited by the director of the Marx-Lenin Institute; and Oba Kako, a *Yomiuri Shinbun* correspondent and promoter of the defunct Socialist League.³⁰ Evidently, the qualifications committee of the congress recognized all the Japanese, except Nosaka, Morito, and Kushida, as delegates with the right to vote, and it granted Oba, who served as interpreter, the right to participate in discussions.³¹

The congress, which met from January 21 to January 27, gave the Comintern its best opportunity to date to explain its attitude toward Asian nationalist movements, since the approximately 150 delegates included many noncommunist revolutionaries. Zinoviev emphasized in his opening speech that the need for communist cooperation with Asian revolutionary nationals was even more pressing than before:

The Communist International is continually taking into account the fact that the revolution of the toilers can be victorious under the present circumstances only as a world revolution. . . . We know that final victory will be assured only if the struggle is not confined to the European continent alone, in which case our struggle will rouse the hundreds of thousands, the hundreds of millions of the toiling and oppressed masses in the East.

Zinoviev also spoke of the Comintern's inadequate knowledge of conditions in the Far East, and promised that the executive committee of the Communist International would listen "with the greatest attention" to the reports and information of the delegates. He admitted that "we know very little of what is happening in such a country as Japan."³²

The congress heard reports from the representatives of China, Korea, Japan, and Java, each speaker giving a description of the political and economic situation in his country together with an estimate of the country's revolutionary potential. Katayama spoke at length on the political and economic problems of Japan in a report that provided the basis for discussion by a special committee on Japan. Takase, Yoshida, and probably Watanabe spoke very briefly on Japan, with Katayama translating into English for them.³³ Takase stated that a Japanese communist party had already been formed, and he went on to describe it as being comprised of older intellectuals who were more interested in theory than in action, and younger men who were not satisfied with an academic communist movement, but were active among factory workers and peasants. He reported that the party was handicapped by a lack of experience and suffered from oppression. Yoshida, who exaggerated the strength of the revolutionary labor movement, dramatically announced his conversion from anarcho-syndicalism to communism. He appears to have been overwhelmed by the conference and motivated by nothing more than a desire to please his hosts, for upon his return to Japan, he returned to the anarcho-syndicalist fold.

The Far Eastern Peoples' Congress satisfied the expectations of the Soviet leaders by endorsing the "Theses on the National and Colonial Question" adopted by the Second Congress of the Comintern, and by issuing its own manifesto, approved at the closing session, declaring, "We desire to become the masters of our own fate and to stop being the playthings of the imperialists' cupidity and greedy appetites. . . . We have met in the Red capitals of the Soviet republic—Moscow and

Petrograd—in order to raise our voices from this world tribune against the world executioners and against the Washington union of the four bloodsuckers.”⁸⁴

Though the congress tended to concentrate upon China and the colonial areas, the Russian hosts did pay some special attention to Japan. According to an account by one of the Japanese delegates, Lenin met with Katayama, Taguchi, and Yoshida on the day before the opening of the congress, telling them, “The Japanese bourgeois rulers are not as ignorant as those of Tsarist Russia. Having seen the success of the Russian revolution and the failure of revolution in Germany and Hungary, they have learned how to suppress the emergence of the proletariat. In this sense, the task of the Japanese comrades is really important.”⁸⁵ Zinoviev also put special emphasis on the role of the Japanese proletariat in the solution of the “Far Eastern problem.” He expressed pleasure that a workers’ movement had been launched, but he recognized that it was still very weak and suffered from the “infantile sickness” of anarcho-syndicalism. “The bourgeoisie,” he pointed out, “does not yet see the clenched fists of the Japanese workers.” He then linked the situation in Japan to a theme that underlay the whole conference:

The fate of the Japanese revolutionary movement is acquiring an enormous international importance. The alliance of the four bloodsuckers formed in Washington for the purpose of crushing, torturing, and partitioning the oppressed peoples of the Far East with even greater savagery than hitherto . . . cannot postpone the hour of the inevitable war in the Pacific Ocean. As sure as morning follows night, so will the first imperialist war, which ended in 1918, be followed by a second war that will center around the Far East and the problem of the Pacific. This war can be avoided . . . only if the young working class of Japan rapidly becomes sufficiently strong to seize the Japanese bourgeoisie by the throat, and if parallel with that there is a victorious revolutionary movement in America.⁸⁶

Georgy Safarov, considered by the Comintern to be its specialist on East Asia, also stressed the importance of Japan. Like Zinoviev, he was cautious in his estimate of the existing revolutionary potential of the Japanese labor movement. On this point, he took issue with Yoshida, claiming that “Comrade Kato (Yoshida’s pseudonym) paints too rosy a picture and represents the Japanese working masses as fully awakened.” It was Safarov who first began to formulate revolutionary strategy for the Japanese proletariat. He asserted that the Japanese

working class could not “throw off the weight of oppression and make the proletarian social revolution directly,” but would first of all have to overcome the combined strength of the bourgeoisie and the landlords. He called on the proletariat to demand “a democratic republic, land nationalization, and the nationalization of large industry with the provision of workers’ control of production.” He also pointed out the need for the proletariat to ally itself with the peasantry in the struggle against oppression, but was careful to emphasize that the revolutionary role of the proletariat was a leading and independent one: the working class would have “the principal position in the common revolutionary struggle for a completely democratic political regime” and play “the leading role in the socialist proletarian revolution.”³⁷

Following the plenary sessions of the congress, a special committee met to discuss the situation in Japan. Its Japanese members were Katayama, who presided over the meeting, Nonaka, Watanabe, Maniwa, Tokuda, Takase, and Yoshida; Zinoviev, Bukharin, Safarov, and Bela Kun represented the Comintern. Katayama gave a brief report based upon his speech to the congress, in which he described the Japanese state as a constitutional monarchy in which the bourgeoisie (represented by the Seiyukai Party) held political power, but whose administration was in the hands of a bureaucracy. He emphasized the repressive nature of the Japanese government, especially its use of police power against the people. He also outlined Japan’s economic progress since the Meiji Restoration in 1868, particularly the development of industry and the increase in the size of the labor force. He analyzed both the exploitative nature of capitalism and worker reaction to it, pointing out that Japan’s workers, lacking the right to strike, found sabotage the “strongest and safest means of fighting against the employers.” It was abundantly clear, he stated, that “the demands of the workers have been becoming more and more radical every day.” As an example, he cited worker demands for “the abolition of capitalism” and “industrial control by the labor unions.” Finally, he compared the situation in Japan to Europe and the United States:

I think that the Japanese worker has made as much progress in the last half century as the worker of Europe has made during the last two or three centuries; and so I am sure that the Japanese proletariat will soon learn how to fight against the capitalist oppressors more successfully than the workers of America or Europe, where the capitalist system is fully developed and established. . . . In Japan . . . capitalism is still in its primitive stage.³⁸

Zinoviev and Safarov in turn suggested that the proletarian movement in Japan was still primitive and “unscientific,” and that it should be transformed into a genuine communist movement. They urged the Japanese delegates to establish a communist party, and explained such organizational principles as the operation of cells and party relationships with labor unions and other bodies. They also discussed strategy, instructing the Japanese delegates to lead the workers and peasants in a common struggle for a completely democratic political regime, rather than to seek to establish a dictatorship of the proletariat and a soviet government immediately. They insisted that this did not mean compromising with the bourgeois political parties: they were not asking the working class “to give up playing an independent role.” They conceded that although the two stages of revolution in Russia had been of seven months’ duration, the period in Japan might be as brief as two or three months.³⁹

There was evidently also some discussion of the Japanese imperial system at the committee meeting. Bukharin, who was working on a draft of a program for the Japanese Communist Party, put forward the slogan “Abolition of the Emperor.” Katayama voiced no opposition, but the other Japanese in attendance felt very uneasy about a direct attack upon that august institution.⁴⁰

After the committee meeting, Takase and Tokuda consulted with Comintern representatives on a number of matters relating to the formation of the Japanese Communist Party and the determination of basic policies for it. The Comintern took every step possible to help the Japanese rid themselves of unorthodox influences, including having Stalin lecture the Japanese delegates on the differences between Leninism, anarchism, and menshevism. (Yamabe contends that Stalin did not give a lecture at the congress, but the other Japanese delegates claim he did. Watanabe even maintains Stalin’s speech was delivered in fluent English and had to be translated by Taguchi.)⁴¹

Most of the Japanese who attended the congress returned to Japan shortly thereafter, but a small number remained in Russia. Katayama went to Berlin to attend an unsuccessful Conference on the International Union of Socialist Parties from April 2 to April 5, and returned to Moscow in May, where he remained as Asian representative to the Comintern. However, his defects were apparent to the Comintern leaders: he was no help as a theorist and, being out of touch with the Japanese scene, he was hardly useful as a source of information. His position in the Comintern proved to be largely a symbolic one; he did

not exert much influence, and his contribution to the Japanese communist movement was minimal. Among the other Japanese in Moscow were Wada Kiichiro, who taught Japanese in the School of Far Eastern Languages, and two new arrivals from Japan, Kitaura Sentaro and Mizunuma Kuma, who entered the Eastern Workers Communist University, or KUTV (called "Kutobe" by the Japanese), to study Marxism-Leninism.⁴² They were the first of a large number of Japanese who undertook similar study in subsequent years. One of the Japanese delegates from the United States, Maniwa, also remained, and was stationed in Vladivostok as a contact man for the Japanese communists.

Of those who returned to Japan from the conference, only Tokuda, Takase, and Nosaka continued to play an active role in the communist movement. Though Suzuki, Nonaka, and Morito later became prominent as socialists, the others soon deserted the political arena: Watanabe engaged in trade with the Soviet Union and became a successful manufacturer of metal plates; Nikaido, finding it difficult to support himself in Japan, returned to the United States and disappeared; Taguchi, who suffered from tuberculosis, was active politically for a time, but was largely independent of the communist movement. Yoshida remained active as an anarcho-syndicalist, but he was wounded in a clash with a group of right-wing nationalists in June 1923, was arrested, and disappeared shortly thereafter.⁴³

BOLSHEVISM IN JAPAN

While the Far Eastern Peoples' Congress was in session, the bolsheviks in Japan stepped up the tempo of their propaganda activities. A group centering around Yamakawa, which included Tadokoro Teruaki, Nishi Masao, Ueda Shigeki, and Takahashi Sadaki, began to publish *Vanguard* (*Zenei*). Tadokoro set the tone of the new journal in an editorial postscript in the first issue, dated January 1, 1922:

All the pages of the new-born *Vanguard* must be full of the assertions, demands, and longings of the proletariat. *Vanguard* openly declares war on the bourgeoisie and its mouthpieces. It analyzes, criticizes, comments upon, and denounces all questions from a completely proletarian viewpoint. All phenomena arising in the capitalist world are taken up by *Vanguard* for discussion by the proletariat. *Vanguard* may be injured and fall, but it will stand up again and march on. But *Vanguard* cannot advance a step without relying upon the main force. . . . *Vanguard* relies upon the power of the proletariat.⁴⁴

A group of Sakai's followers, including Ichikawa Shoichi, Sano Fumio, and Aono Suekichi, founded *The Proletariat* (*Musankaikyu*) in April. Watanabe Masanosuke and other Marxist radicals in the labor movement began publishing *Labor Union* (*Rodo Kumiai*) in June.

Much of the bolshevist writing was directed against the anarcho-syndicalists, especially Osugi, who had resumed publication of *Labor Movement* in January 1922. (He had interrupted its publication for a second time the preceding June.) Sakai, for example, accused Osugi and his followers of being totally ignorant of the "necessary steps" required by "social realities." The anarcho-syndicalists answered by criticizing the "realism" of the bolshevists, accusing them of seeking to enslave the people in the name of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." They continued to attack the policies and practices of the Russian government, and asserted that only anarcho-syndicalists were capable of infusing society with a new spirit. Yet the split between the older bolshevists and the anarcho-syndicalists, though widening, was not quite complete: Yamakawa and Sakai published articles in *Labor Movement*, and Yamakawa, whose pieces constitute the clearest statement of the views of the bolshevists, was still strongly influenced by anarcho-syndicalism.

The fundamental difference between the bolshevists and the anarcho-syndicalists was to be found in their respective attitudes toward political action. The anarcho-syndicalists never wavered in their negative attitude toward such action, while the position of the bolshevists, especially as expressed by the increasingly influential Yamakawa, was somewhat ambivalent. Yamakawa addressed himself in the February issue of *Vanguard* to the key political issue facing all left-wing groups in Japan: whether or not the proletarian movement should make use of suffrage and the Diet in its struggle.⁴⁵ This same question had plagued Lenin for many years. Yamakawa's answer was that the use of such political tools was a matter of strategy and tactics and had to be judged in accordance with conditions in Japanese society. He found it difficult to abandon the anarcho-syndicalist position that, given the nature of Japanese society, political action was a trap for the labor movement. He opposed universal suffrage on the ground that it created "the danger that the proletarian movement would be emasculated by parliamentarianism." As a communist, he accepted the idea that the class struggle must be a political struggle, but he minimized the usefulness of the Diet, largely because of conditions peculiar to Japan. To Yamakawa, the crucial factor was the oppressive character

of Japanese capitalism. He maintained that because the Japanese bourgeoisie had never been revolutionary, as had the bourgeoisie in Europe, what had replaced feudal, aristocratic government in Japan in the nineteenth century was not bourgeois democracy but government by bureaucratic and military cliques. According to Yamakawa's analysis, Japanese capitalism had developed under the protection of these cliques, and only recently had the Japanese bourgeoisie become independent of them and "positively grasped political power." He described government by the bourgeoisie as follows:

When the political power of the bourgeoisie was firmly established, Japanese capitalism had already reached the third stage—of imperialism and reaction—under the pressure of the world situation. The psychology of Japanese capitalism at the time that bourgeois political power was established was not that of freedom and democracy, but that of uneasiness and reaction characteristic of the final period of capitalism. It had an aggressive attitude toward the rising proletariat. The form of government that it needed was no longer democracy but the most undisguised type of dictatorship.

Yamakawa held that it would be a mistake to assume that a period of liberalism and democracy similar to that experienced by the advanced capitalist nations would come to Japan: "Whether universal suffrage is effected or not, the Japanese bourgeoisie will certainly get more reactionary and uneasy, and it will no doubt take a more aggressive attitude toward the proletarian movement."

What then should the proletariat do? When Yamakawa answered that question, it was not without some equivocation. He suggested that for the present the Japanese proletarian movement should not put its faith in parliamentarianism. It should abstain from voting, and instead rely upon extra-parliamentary political actions—strikes and demonstrations. He added this word of caution: "If we are to abstain from voting, we must do so consciously and positively. Abstention will have no value from the standpoint of the class struggle unless it involves a popular movement of positive significance. It is an evasion of the class struggle to avoid voting out of political indifference and unconsciousness. This of course is not proletarian tactics."*

* It is impossible to resist the temptation to quote from an article by Kotoku Shusui, "Changing My Ideas," in the February 5, 1907, issue of *Heimin Shinbun*. "More important than obtaining a petition for universal suffrage signed by 1,000 people is to obtain the self-consciousness of 10 workers; more important than spending 2,000 yen for an election movement is to spend 10 yen on workers' organizations; more important than making 10 speeches in the Diet is to make one lecture to workers" (cited in Scalapino's manuscript on the Japanese labor movement).

Quite clearly, Yamakawa saw the bourgeoisie as the oppressor of the proletariat. In his view, the political power of the bourgeoisie was firmly established; feudal, aristocratic government had been replaced by capitalist dictatorship. Japan had not passed through a stage of democratic government, nor was it likely to, so long as imperialistic and reactionary capitalists were dominant. There was no reason therefore for the proletariat to put faith in suffrage and the Diet; parliamentarianism would only assist the bourgeoisie. Yamakawa did not venture to devise a specific revolutionary strategy for Japan, but he seemed to imply that the proletariat would “perfect democracy” as part of the socialist revolt against capitalism.

THE FORMATION OF THE JAPANESE COMMUNIST PARTY

After Tokuda and Takase returned to Japan in May, they tried to persuade Yamakawa, Sakai, and the younger and more militant of their followers to form a communist party. They urged that a party be organized in time for recognition by the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, scheduled to convene in November 1922. Yamakawa and Sakai still questioned the feasibility of establishing a political party, but there was strong support for the idea among their younger followers, as well as among members of the defunct Enlightened People's Communist Party who had been released on bail, and a small number of labor union leaders and members. When Arahata responded affirmatively, Yamakawa and Sakai acquiesced, though they continued to regard the move as premature. Arahata describes the situation in his memoirs:

As a result of the instructions that Tokuda and Takase brought on their return home, the desire to organize a communist party reached the point where it could not be put off for even a day. From the first, Sakai and other older leaders seemed to have taken the cautious position that a propaganda group should be organized to spread communist ideas widely among the labor unions before the formation of a party on a popular basis was begun. In addition, they may have entertained slight misgivings because of Kondo's recent blunders. This may be why they were [later] criticized for favoring following the masses, which, even at that time, may have dissatisfied most of the inexperienced young comrades. This was natural, for the older veterans, who had survived many years of repression and persecution, were prudent, if not cowardly, about everything, while the younger men, under the illusion that revolution might occur the very next day, wanted to form a party quickly. Inevitably, there were cleavages.⁴⁶

The Japanese Communist Party was formally organized on July 15, 1922, at a secret meeting in Takase's house in Tokyo. This meeting has come to be regarded as the first party convention, although only a small group was in attendance. Sakai was named party chairman, and Yamakawa, Arahata, Yoshikawa, Hashiura, Takatsu, and Kondo, members of an executive committee. (Tokuda has usually been included in lists of the executive committee members, but according to a recent account by Takase, Kondo was appointed instead of Tokuda. Arahata has also asserted that Tokuda was not on the executive committee.)⁴⁷ The group adopted a tentative constitution based upon that of the British Communist Party; in fact, it was disguised to appear to be that of the British Communist Party in case copies should be confiscated by the authorities. The new party pledged "to act positively as a branch of the Comintern and as a leader of the revolutionary movement of the Japanese proletariat."⁴⁸

The party membership in these early years rarely exceeded 50 in number.* It fell heir to much of the factionalism of the radical left-wing movement (a situation that was soon to cause many difficulties), and was, in fact, hardly a party at all, in the sense of a unified organization with an accepted platform and operational tactics. There was little solidarity, and no effective central leadership: the party members continued to work primarily in their own cliques, the most influential of which were the intellectual and publishing circles around Yamakawa and Sakai. Some of the party's members held important positions in the labor movement and were able to spread communist influence in it. One was the youthful Nosaka, who returned from Russia in the spring of 1922, and was head of the international section of

* The concept of party membership presents a problem. Individuals were not registered as party members, but merely belonged to groups centering around the bolshevist leaders. The following is a list of the groups and their members that made up the First Japanese Communist Party. (Members whose names are marked with a dagger [†] joined the Second Japanese Communist Party; most of the others were later active in legal left-wing parties and organizations.) VETERAN BOLSHEVISTS: Sakai Toshihiko, Yamakawa Hitoshi, Arahata Kanson, Yoshikawa Morikuni, Hashiura Tokio; YAMAKAWA'S WEDNESDAY SOCIETY GROUP AND PUBLISHING CIRCLE OF *Vanguard*: Nishi Masao†, Tadokoro Teruaki†, Ueda Shigeaki†, Takahashi Sadaki†, Tokuda Kyuichi†; PUBLISHING CIRCLE OF SAKAI'S *The Proletariat*: Ichikawa Shoichi†, Aono Suekichi, Sano Fumio†, Hirabayashi Hatsunosuke; ENLIGHTENED PEOPLE'S COMMUNIST PARTY GROUP: Takatsu Seido, Takase Kiyoshi, Nakasone Genwa, Kondo Eizo, Takano Takeji, Arai Kuninosuke; SODOMEI MEMBERS: Akamatsu Katsumaro, Nosaka Sanzo†, Yamamoto Kenzo†, Tsujii Taminosuke†; OTHER UNIONISTS: Watanabe Mitsuzo, Sugiura Keiichi†, Watanabe Masanosuke†, Ichikawa Yoshio†, Nabe-yama Sadachika†, Nakamura Yoshiaki†, Hanaoka Kiyoshi, Kokuryo Goichiro†, Taniguchi Zentarō†, Haniya Tamazo, Hayama Yoshiki; OTHERS: Urata Takeo, Sano Manabu†, Inamura Ryuichi, Kawauchi Tadahiko†, Inomata Tsunao, Koiwai Kiyoshi.

Sodomei (Nihon Rodo Sodomei, or Japan Federation of Labor, was the new name adopted by Yuaikai at its April 1921 convention). Others were Akamatsu, who worked in Sodomei's research department; Sugiura Keiichi, who headed a communist cell in the Kanto Machine Workers Union; Yamamoto Kenzo, who was a leader in the Tokyo Steel Workers Union; and Tsujii Taminosuke, who was a Sodomei local leader in Kyoto. Perhaps the most effective of the communist labor leaders was Watanabe Masanosuke, who organized the Nankatsu Labor Society, comprising workers employed in small factories in the poorer eastern section of Tokyo.

Since the Japanese Communist Party was organized in secret, there were no public declarations associated with its name. But communists as individuals or members of small cliques actively contributed to various journals, which tended to serve as semi-official organs of the party. Among these were *Vanguard* and *The Proletariat*, which were quite similar and were devoted primarily to current affairs, and *Studies in Socialism*, which was generally more theoretical and concentrated on left-wing ideological developments abroad. In April 1923 these three journals merged to form *Red Flag* (*Sekki*), which was more like a true party organ.* Communist labor leaders like Nosaka, Akamatsu, and Tsujii published in such Sodomei journals as *Labor* and *Workers' News* (*Rodosha Shinbun*).

YAMAKAWA'S ROLE

Yamakawa continued to be the most influential among the communist writers. His understanding of Marxism, which was matched only by that of Sakai, and his knowledge of European history, especially of the Russian Revolution, helped to place him in the position of leading theorist. His views came the closest to being the equivalent of party dogma. This was certainly true in the case of his treatise "Change of Direction in the Proletarian Movement," which appeared in the July-August 1922 issue of *Vanguard*.⁴⁹

In this treatise, Yamakawa called for a transformation of the Japanese proletarian movement from a movement based on the commit-

* *Red Flag* became *Class War* (*Kaikyusen*) in July 1923, after there were arrests in June 1923 that decimated the party. According to Cecil Uyehara, the modification was made after the Home Ministry requested a change in the name because "red flag" to them implied revolution (Uyehara, p. 220). *Class War* ceased publication after the second issue in August 1923. The Second Japanese Communist Party began publication of *Red Flag* again in February 1928.

ment of a small group into one based on the support of the masses. He argued that the Japanese proletarian movement, whose "two aspects" were the socialist movement and the labor movement, had clarified its principles and purified its ideology, but that its isolation from the masses was a high price to pay for this attention to ideology. Furthermore, he deplored what he termed the "passive attitude" of both the socialists and the labor leaders. Conceding that the socialist movement had had to grow in unfavorable circumstances "without parallel in the world," and that its separation from the masses had been necessary, since the proletariat was under the influence of the capitalists, he nevertheless was harsh in his description of the movement:

Ten or twenty enthusiasts get together, dream about the next day of revolution, and make big talk. . . . At best they would satisfy their "rebellious spirit" by taking "revolutionary action" against a policeman and spending a night under police detention. Although they reject the capitalist system, they actually do not lay even a finger upon it. As long as they adhere to such a passive attitude, they become more isolated from the proletarian masses.

His criticism of the labor movement was in a similar vein: while the vanguard's attention to the perfection of its ideology was commendable and undoubtedly necessary, it was lamentable that the forerunners now found themselves "apart from the ordinary union members around them and even more so from the masses of the working class."

In Yamakawa's judgment, the small group of forerunners that represented the proletarian movement in Japan had already taken "its first step forward" by banding together, and was ready to enter a second stage with a new slogan, "Into the Masses!" He explained what the slogan meant:

We must unmistakably see what the masses actually demand, although we must at the same time keep the final goal of the proletarian movement in sight. . . . Our goal is the destruction of capitalism. We know that any reform short of that can never liberate us. But if the proletarian masses demand the improvement of their immediate daily life, our present movement must be based on this popular demand. . . . If the proletarian masses now demand only an increase by 10 sen a day in their wages instead of control of production, our present movement must be based on this concrete demand.

"In other words," he asserted, "our movement must become more practical."

Yamakawa made it clear that the proletarian movement must also reject its "passive attitude" toward bourgeois government. "On any front where capitalism expresses authority and control, we must move on . . . to an attitude of positive struggle," he stated. "The political front is the place where the authority and control of the bourgeoisie find their most naked and direct expression. . . . To simply reject the existing system of bourgeois politics ideologically cannot bring the slightest injury to it. If the proletariat truly rejects bourgeois politics, it must not be simply passive. . . . It must put up proletarian politics against bourgeois politics." He did not specifically relate "proletarian politics" to suffrage or to political parties, however, though he did point out that some of the demands of the labor unions—for instance, their demands for recognition of "Workers' and Peasants' Russia," for "rights of living," and for settlement of the unemployment problem—were demands on the state and thus represented an existing political movement of the proletariat.

Yamakawa denied that his "change of direction" involved "a fall from the principle of revolution to reformism." It was not a question of whether or not the demands of the masses were acceded to, he insisted, but of whether or not those demands were used to build a "concrete" movement for the achievement of the final goal. However, in concluding his treatise, he warned that if the small vanguard that had "taken the first step with so much difficulty," were to take its ideology to the masses and allow itself to become "dissolved," that would indeed be "a fall from revolutionary principles to reformism . . . and opportunism," instead of a step forward.

The official lore of the Japanese Communist Party holds that Yamakawa wrote this treatise on party orders in order to explain the two slogans "Advance into the Masses" and "Advance Toward a Political Struggle," which had been adopted by the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1921.* Yamakawa has denied that the party instructed him to prepare it, and Arahata, in his memoirs, supports Yamakawa's contention.⁵⁰ The period of time that elapsed between the inaugural meeting of the party (July 15) and the publication of the treatise (July–August *Vanguard*) also tends to support Yamakawa.⁵¹ However, it would be foolhardy to suppose that Yamakawa was not influenced by Comintern declarations, especially those that reinforced his deep

* Ichikawa states that the original spirit of the slogans was unconsciously distorted by Yamakawa, who was representative of the petty bourgeois and syndicalist remnants that prevailed in the party. Nevertheless, Ichikawa concedes that because of this treatise and other activities of party members, the Japanese proletariat was growing more radical during this period (*Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 61–62).

concern about the course of development of the Japanese proletarian movement. He wrote later that he had the impression that the movement was largely one in which "those defeated in the competition of capitalist society, as well as stragglers, cynics, and malcontents, flocked together to reassure themselves with boastful words."⁵² Yamakawa strongly opposed this tendency, and like Osugi, he attacked the intellectual's penchant for abstract theory. His emphasis upon the need to link the socialist and labor movements with the everyday demands of the masses influenced radical and moderate leftists alike. He was particularly anxious to free labor leaders from the hold of anarcho-syndicalism, and therefore began to put more emphasis on the political role to be played by the proletariat. He was not clear, however, about the nature of that role, as is evidenced by the fact that he continued to advise the proletariat to put no faith in parliamentarianism and to abstain from voting, should universal suffrage become a reality.

As for the Communist Party, Yamakawa thought that it should seek to develop a mass base by supporting the workers' demands, at the same time imposing its leadership on the proletarian movement as the class consciousness of the working class deepened. The natural culmination of this process would be the revolution, led by the party vanguard, but based on a solid foundation of mass support.

Yamakawa was somewhat clearer concerning strategy in his article "The United Front of the Proletariat," which appeared in the August issue of *Emancipation*.⁵³ In this article, his thinking had quite clearly been influenced by general Comintern instructions regarding the need to establish a united front among labor unions. (The executive committee of the Comintern had issued a set of 25 theses on "The United Workers' Front" in December 1921, and the central executive committee of the Profintern followed with a declaration on united fronts in January 1922. In what was the equivalent of the Russian bolshevik policy of "unity from below," these documents exhorted communist parties "to support the slogan of a united workers' front and take the initiative in this question into their hands," while maintaining their own organizational and ideological independence as well as the right "to express their opinions about the policy of all organizations of the working class without exception.")⁵⁴ Yamakawa was aware of the content of the Comintern and Profintern declarations; in fact, a summary of them had been translated into Japanese by Nishi Masao, and was published in the July 1922 issue of *Studies in Socialism*.

In the *Emancipation* article, Yamakawa urged the establishment of a united front in the labor movement as a means of mobilizing the

working masses and developing their class consciousness. He insisted that this would not lead necessarily to compromise and alliance “with reformist, social democratic, or bureaucratic leaders of labor unions.” He argued that the Communist Party could and should preserve its independence, and explicitly called on it to criticize the policies of “reformist and bureaucratic labor leaders.” However, what Yamakawa was asking for would have been difficult, if not impossible, to achieve under almost any conditions, let alone the existing situation in the Japanese labor movement: hostility among the leaders and growing apathy among the workers were the hallmarks of the day.*

Yamakawa's ideas were the most influential ideological force in the newly established Japanese Communist Party, but they were often largely hortatory and not very helpful in developing a specific program for political action. His “Change of Direction” was hardly more than a call to arms for intellectuals. Yamakawa was more interested in spreading ideas than he was in political activity. Even his suggestion that the party reflect the actual demands of the masses and build on them was not thought out in terms of organizational techniques, nor did he indicate how the party was to implement his call for a united front from below. He appeared to believe that the dissemination of ideas would develop class consciousness in labor, and once that was achieved, labor would have sufficient strength to change Japanese society. He felt that labor would generate the revolution on its own. In his view, the bourgeoisie already held political power, and the struggle of labor was a struggle against the bourgeoisie. Therefore, Japan was on the verge of a socialist revolution against capitalism—a revolution in which democracy would be perfected as part of the revolutionary process. Yamakawa did not seem to understand the role to be played by the Japanese Communist Party in mobilizing the masses for effective action; he regarded the party as an intellectual vanguard for spreading the truths of Marxism-Leninism, but not as an active political agent. Moreover, since he had experienced the repressive power of the state and was fearful of it, he tended to be cautious. Because of these ideas and attitudes—whether they fit the actual situation in Japan or not—Yamakawa was hardly the kind of leader that the Comintern would support.

* Arahata agreed with Yamakawa in principle, but pointed out that the establishment of such a united front would be extremely difficult in Japan. He was particularly concerned about the vanguard's ability to maintain independent criticism (Arahata, “Rodo Kyodo Sensen”).

The Party, Yamakawaism, and Dissolution, 1922-1924

The labor movement continued to be the main arena for the struggles between the anarcho-syndicalists, communists, and social democrats, though often it was difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between their positions. On some issues, the anarcho-syndicalists and the communists made common cause; on others, the communists and the social democrats stood together. The anarcho-syndicalists and most of the communists opposed universal suffrage and parliamentarianism, but they fought bitterly over organizational issues. The anarcho-syndicalists continued to insist upon decentralization and local autonomy for unions, whereas the communists, who were in substantial agreement with the social democrats, argued that without centralization and strong leadership the unions could not mobilize sufficient power to struggle against capitalism.

Though the left-wing groups vehemently attacked each other, constantly repeating the same charges, one thing was clear: radicalism was gaining momentum. Labor disputes and strikes became increasingly violent in 1921 and 1922, as it became apparent that Japan's capitalists would not make concessions on major issues like the recognition of unions and the institution of collective bargaining. A particularly dramatic example was when some 35,000 striking workers, spurred on by *Yuaikai* leaders, tried to seize control of the Kawasaki Dockyards and Mitsubishi Shipyards at Kobe on July 12, 1921. They were stopped when the governor called for an army battalion to suppress them, but another major clash followed on July 29, this time between the police and the workers. On this occasion, some 200 labor leaders, including Kagawa Toyohiko, were arrested. By August 9, the strike was crushed. Other strikes and efforts to utilize direct action also ended in failure.

The growing radicalism was also reflected in *Yuaikai* and its successor, *Sodomei*, where the moderates were able to maintain control for a while, but were ultimately swept along with the tide. At *Yuaikai*'s convention in the autumn of 1921, the moderates were able to defeat two anarcho-syndicalist resolutions—one rejecting collective bargain-

ing as a compromise with capitalism, and the other opposing universal suffrage and urging adoption of the general strike as the basic union tactic. Soon after, however, they were forced to give way. A meeting of the Kansai League of Sodomei early in April 1922 passed resolutions opposing universal suffrage and legal status for labor unions, and supporting the use of sabotage in labor disputes. The general convention of the Kanto League of Sodomei in July took a similar stand, approving, in addition, the utilization of the general strike. Finally, in August, the central committee of Sodomei adopted the position that the working class and the capitalist class could not coexist and that labor should fight the oppressive persecution of the capitalist class to the end. Quite clearly, Sodomei was moving toward a commitment to the strategy and tactics of revolution.

The organizational issue came to a head during the summer and early autumn of 1922, when labor leaders, despite their differences, agreed once again on a need to unify the labor movement in order to stand firm against capitalism. Sodomei took the lead in negotiating with other unions to organize a stronger national federation. An inaugural rally of the so-called General Federation of Japanese Labor Unions (*Nihon Rodo Kumiai Sorengo*) was arranged for September 30 at Osaka. One hundred and six delegates, representing 59 unions with a membership of 27,480 workers, as well as a number of communists and anarcho-syndicalists, including Sakai, Yamakawa, Arahata, and Osugi, attended. However, various factions were unable to reconcile their conflicting viewpoints. The communists and the social democrats stood on one side, and the anarcho-syndicalists on the other. There was little inclination on either side to capitulate or even to compromise. Argument followed upon argument, and when the competing groups began brawling, the police intervened and dissolved the meeting.

When Sodomei held its annual convention at Osaka a few days later, it became clear that anarcho-syndicalist influence was declining rapidly. Labor leaders were disillusioned with direct action tactics: almost every strike in the past few years had ended in failure and in the destruction of the union that undertook it. The convention passed resolutions favoring a highly centralized union organization based on national industrial unions, and though it adhered to a militant anti-capitalist strategy, it called for political as well as economic tactics in fighting the existing social order. The passage of a resolution in support of the communist regime in Soviet Russia indicated that commu-

nist influence was on the rise. The crucial conflict in the labor movement was now to be between the social democrats and the communists.

The communists made every effort to strengthen their position in the labor movement in the following few months. In December, Watanabe Masanosuke, Yamamoto, and Nosaka, who were active in Sodomei, formed a secret preparatory committee (which was reorganized into a "Labor Union Left" in March 1923) for the purpose of bringing revolutionary workers "directly under party control." Meanwhile, they sought to lead Sodomei further to the left, and to increase its power by bringing radical independent unions into it. In October, Watanabe organized the Nankatsu Labor Union (Minami Katsushika Rodo Kyokai), composed of workers—mostly printers and watchmakers—in small factories in the eastern part of Tokyo, and in December, other communists, particularly Sugiura, were instrumental in bringing Tokyo's machinists into the Kanto Machine Workers Union. The ultimate objective of the communists was to transform Sodomei into a federation representing all unions, organized by industry, with their party in control. However, despite all their activities, the communists had only limited success because they lacked an effective program for the development of party cells in factories.¹

EXTRA-LABOR ACTIVITIES

Members of the Japanese Communist Party were also active in the emerging peasant movement and its organizations. They followed in the footsteps of moderates like Kagawa, who took the lead in April 1922 in uniting a large number of existing peasant associations under the Japan Peasant Union (Nihon Nomin Kumiai). Though the initiative in organizing the union was taken largely by intellectuals who had experience in the urban labor movement, the willingness of peasants to join was a reflection of their growing political consciousness. (Two years after its formation, the Japan Peasant Union claimed a membership of 52,000 in 694 local branches.)² The peasants had become increasingly aware, for example, that the verdicts in many of the court cases they lost were based on unjust laws, especially those laws concerned with tenants' rights. Consequently, the Japan Peasant Union platform called for legislation to correct the injustices in the tenancy laws and to provide for arbitration in landlord-tenant disputes, which had risen sharply in number in 1921, as well as for the improve-

ment of village life and greater educational opportunities.³ In the early summer of 1922, communists helped to establish the Kanto League (Nihon Nomin Kumiai Kanto Domei) of the Peasant Union, and in September began to publish *Peasant Movement* (*Nomin Undo*) in order to increase the political consciousness of the peasantry. Edited by Urata Takeo, *Peasant Movement* was much more radical in tone than the journal of the Peasant Union—*Land and Freedom* (*Tochi to Jiyu*). It took the position that though demands for legislation improving the lot of the peasants within the capitalist system were doomed to failure, they provided an effective means of linking the peasantry to the class struggle and the revolution against capitalism. *Land and Freedom*, by contrast, tended to be less doctrinaire and to concentrate on specific and immediate economic objectives, such as reduction of rents, protection of tenant rights, and minimum wage scales for agricultural day laborers.

The emergence of an organized peasant movement, increasingly influenced by left-wing ideologies, had an impact upon the socialist movement as a whole. Most important, it weakened anarcho-syndicalism by creating a need for a broader socialist movement than one based exclusively on labor. Both the social democrats and the communists were quick to reflect this need in their strategy and tactics, and when universal suffrage loomed as a reality, they began looking toward the establishment of some kind of united front.

Communists were active in other areas. They were instrumental in the establishment on November 20, 1922, of the National Federation of Students, or Gakuren, which had branches at 26 universities and preparatory schools. Among the most prominent member groups were the New Men Society at Tokyo Imperial University and the Culture League (Bunka Domei) at Waseda University. The Culture League was formed by members of the Builders' League and of the Enlightened People's Society; among its leaders were the communists Sano Manabu and Inomata Tsunao.⁴ The Communist Party also created a Communist Youth League, with Kawai Yoshitora of the Nankatsu Labor Union as the central figure, and with Sano Manabu, Inomata, Takase, and Tokuda as sponsors. (A Communist Youth International had been formed in November 1919. After the Comintern's Third Congress in 1921, this youth group was headquartered in Moscow and held its congresses simultaneously with the congresses of the Comintern.)⁵ A third group in which the communists were active was the Levelers' Society (Suiheisha), which was struggling to end racial and

occupational discrimination against outcast communities. The young and militant Takahashi Sadaki played a leading role in the society, and in November 1923, helped to establish the Leveler Youth League, which he hoped to bring under communist leadership.⁶

The communists also continued to advance the interests of the Soviet government and people, and published a stream of articles critical of Japanese policy toward Soviet Russia. They attempted to secure support for the Soviet government through the various mass organizations in which they were influential, and were responsible for securing a labor endorsement during the 1922 May Day ceremonies in Tokyo of a resolution calling for official recognition of the Soviet regime. They also called for the withdrawal of Japanese troops from Siberia, the opening of trade between Japan and Soviet Russia, and the supply of funds and goods to Russia for famine relief. To achieve the latter objective, the communists formed a number of associations and appealed for funds through *Vanguard*. (Their appeals for relief had little success: the party sent only some 2,000 yen to the Russian Famine Relief International Labor Committee in Berlin in August.)

THE DRAFT PLATFORM

Although the Japanese communists were engaged on all these fronts, they had not worked out their strategy and tactics for revolution. Yamakawa's call for "a change of direction" hardly constituted a concrete program. The Comintern leaders were aware of this deficiency, and at the Fourth Comintern Congress, which convened in Moscow in November 1922, they turned their attention to drafting a platform for the Japanese Communist Party. Takase and Kawauchi Tadahiko were attending the congress as the official representatives of the Japanese Communist Party. They heard Zinoviev describe the new party to the delegates as follows: "In Japan there is a small party that, with the assistance of the executive committee of the Communist International, has united its forces with the best syndicalist elements. This is a young party, but it represents a strong nucleus. It should now provide itself with a program."⁷ (Katayama also attended, and made a report on the "Eastern question," in which he declared that greater attention should be paid to the revolutionary movement in Japan, if only because Soviet Russia was "menaced by Japanese imperialism.")⁸

The Fourth Congress recognized the Japanese Communist Party as a branch of the Comintern, and a special committee formulated a draft

platform—the so-called “Bukharin Theses”—to be approved by the party in Japan.* There is no evidence that the Japanese delegates played any role in its actual preparation, although Katayama was probably consulted.⁹ In all likelihood, the platform was the product of the collective judgment of the Comintern leaders, especially Bukharin, Zinoviev, and Radek, and possibly Trotsky. It is not known to what extent they relied on reports regarding Japan from their own agents at Shanghai.†

The draft platform began with an analysis of the development of Japanese society. It was noted that there were “peculiarities” in the development of Japanese capitalism. These “peculiarities” were the feudal relationships that still remained:

The greater part of the land is today in the hands of semifeudal big landlords. . . . Remnants of feudal relationships are manifested in the structure of the state, which is controlled by a bloc . . . of the commercial and industrial capitalists and of the big landlords. . . . Under such conditions the opposition to state power emanates not only from the working class, peasants and petty bourgeoisie, but also from a great segment of the liberalistic bourgeoisie.

With the continuing development of capitalism, the political demands of the liberalistic opposition have increased. . . . The forceful development of capitalism and the progress of the bourgeois revolution drive the working class and the great mass of peasants into the struggle. Thus, the masses become an active political factor in the life of the country. . . . *Since the completion of the bourgeois revolution in Japan is dependent upon a powerful proletariat and the mass of revolutionary peasants . . . , it can be a direct prelude to the proletarian revolution, which has as its aims the overthrow of bourgeois control and the realization of proletarian dictatorship.* [Italics added.]

The Japanese Communist Party was directed to make every effort to mobilize all social forces capable of carrying on the struggle against the existing government—the first stage of the revolution. This meant

* The full text of this document appears as Appendix A, pp. 279-82.

† Voitinsky had analyzed the Japanese situation in an article in *Communist Review*, in which he stated that recent parliamentary campaigns in Japan had clearly shown that there was a struggle for power between a landed aristocracy allied with a powerful military clique and an energetic and youthful bourgeoisie. He reported that the labor movement had traditionally been hostile to the concept of political action, but that now the advanced elements of the revolutionary workers had begun to break with the syndicalist tradition and to enter the ranks of the young Communist Party. Voitinsky viewed this as an indication that the labor vanguard was becoming aware of a need to take political action in order to make use of the bourgeoisie's victory over the old order (Voitinsky, pp. 401-13).

forming a solid bloc with the anarcho-syndicalists, using "every means for gaining influence among the masses of peasants, particularly the poor peasants," and working with the bourgeoisie—at least to the extent of making use of bourgeois demands on the government. However, the party was instructed to "ruthlessly criticize" all contradictions in the bourgeoisie's activity and disclose any acts of treachery the bourgeoisie committed "out of its fear of the rise of the working class."

The draft platform listed the most important objectives of the first stage, grouping them as demands in four fields: politics, economics, agriculture, and foreign relations. Its political demands included the abolition of the imperial system and the House of Peers; universal suffrage for everyone over eighteen; total freedom for labor organizations, including the workers' freedom to publish, assemble, demonstrate, and strike; the abolition of all existing armed forces, including the police; and the arming of workers. (In some versions of the platform, the last of these has been omitted.) The economic demands included the institution of an eight-hour working day, labor insurance, wages based on market prices, and a guaranteed minimum wage; the control of production by factory committees; and the official recognition of labor unions as public institutions of the working class. In the field of agriculture, the platform called for the nationalization without compensation of the emperor's lands, as well as those of the big landlords and the temples; the establishment of a land fund for poor peasants; the transfer to tenant farmers of the land they worked (but not as private property); and the institution of both a progressive income tax and a special luxury tax. On foreign issues, the platform called for the abandonment of all attempts at intervention; the withdrawal of Japanese troops from Korea, China, Taiwan, and Sakhalin; and the recognition of Soviet Russia.

The role assigned the Japanese Communist Party was a crucial one:

The working class of Japan will achieve victory in its struggle for the establishment of proletarian dictatorship by way of overthrowing the existing government only when it has a united and centralized leadership group. The opposition to such a directorate by some revolutionary elements (anarchists, syndicalists, etc.) arises from the fact that they cannot understand the whole situation that will develop inevitably at the decisive moment of the struggle. The struggle will sooner or later lead to a direct clash with the power of the state, which has a strong, centralized mechanism. In order to smash this mechanism, the revolutionary proletariat must act on plans based upon a unity of organized strength and of opinion.

The immediate task of the party was to win over the labor unions by destroying "the influence and power of yellow, patriotic, social reformist leaders in the labor movement" and, at the same time, elevating "its own prestige and power among the broad mass of workers organized into unions." It was the duty of the communists to support workers in all of their actions against employers and the state, and to play the leading role in all labor movements, however small. "The party must make every effort toward a firm tie with the working masses and avoid anything that might isolate it from the workers."

The strategy of the Japanese Communist Party was to be based on two programs: a maximum program and a minimum program. The maximum program would deal with the primary objective—the socialist revolution that was to replace government based on the interests of the bourgeoisie with one based on the interests of the proletariat. The minimum program would deal with the immediate objective—the achievement of the democratic revolution that was to democratize the masses and improve their economic condition. This strategy would enable the party of the proletariat to capture the leadership of the peasant masses, who by definition could not be expected to aspire to Marxist aims, and to form temporary alliances with other political groups like the urban petty bourgeoisie. The elimination of the vestiges of feudalism in Japan and the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution was a necessary stage in the revolutionary process. "Only after this first direct task has been fulfilled . . . should the Japanese Communist Party strive to advance the revolution, deepen it, and make efforts toward the acquisition of power by soviets of workers and peasants."*

REORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY

Takase and Kawauchi returned to Japan in December, but their party colleagues did not formally discuss the draft platform for several months. Meanwhile, the party made a number of organizational changes. A second convention of the party was held on February 4,

* This was a combination of Leninism and classical Marxist thinking. Lenin had insisted that precapitalist Russia had to experience a capitalist, democratic revolution before it could undergo a proletarian, socialist revolution. However, the events of 1905 convinced him that the bourgeoisie of Russia was not capable of carrying through a democratic revolution. He therefore called for action by the proletariat in advance of a socialist revolution, insisting that the proletariat do the job of the bourgeoisie by bringing under its own leadership all the revolutionary forces in the country (see McKenzie, pp. 102-3).

1923, in the town of Ichigawa, near Tokyo; 17 members attended.* At this meeting, the party increased the size of its executive committee, assigning responsibilities as follows: Sakai, secretary-general; Sano Manabu, international affairs secretary and chairman of the education department; Yoshikawa, treasurer; Nakasone, secretary to the secretary-general; Urata, chairman of the peasants department; Ueda, chairman of the publications department; and Watanabe Masanosuke, chairman of the labor department. Other members of the new executive committee were Sugiura, who was assigned to the labor department, and Koiwai and Tsujii, who were made organizers for the cities of Osaka and Kyoto, respectively.

Yamakawa, Takatsu, and Kondo were not reelected to the executive committee, and Tokuda was excluded from a major post. Yamakawa apparently chose to be excluded, preferring the role of senior adviser. However, in the cases of Takatsu and Kondo, they seem to have lost their positions because of rivalry between the group representing the Enlightened People's Communist Party (Gyomin) and the followers of Yamakawa and Sakai.† Moreover, Kondo was still regarded as an "adventurer" by Sakai.¹⁰ Tokuda's case is more complicated. It seems that the older leaders considered him an overly ambitious and reckless junior member who tried to cloak himself with the authority of the Comintern, and there are indications that they tried to rid the party of him, alleging that he had misused party funds.¹¹ (Tokuda had reported that he had received funds from the Comintern in Shanghai, but that on his voyage home, one Kobayashi Shinjiro flushed more than half the money down the toilet. His story could not be checked because Kobayashi was in Manchuria.)¹² Tokuda attributed his plight to factionalism based on ideological differences:

At that time, I insisted that a parliamentary struggle be conducted, opposing Yamakawa Hitoshi's group, which disapproved of this tactic, and Sano Manabu, who rejected universal suffrage; and at the same time, I criticized the right-wing, social-democratic parliamentarianism of Sakai Toshihiko's group. The Gyomin people, who defended Sakai, made a party issue of the

* According to one source, the members present were Sakai, Kondo, Arahata, Hashiura, Yoshikawa, Takase, Takatsu, Tokuda, Ueda, Tadokoro, Kawauchi, Watanabe Masanosuke, Sano Manabu, Nakasone, Urata, Koiwai, and Tashiro (*Nihon Rodo Nenkan-1924*, p. 604). A list in Tateyama has the same names with one exception: the name Watanabe Mitsuzo appears in place of that of Watanabe Masanosuke (Tateyama, p. 107).

† According to Tokuda, Yamakawa and Takatsu were not elected because they were still strongly influenced by anarcho-syndicalism, and rejected the parliamentary struggle (Tokuda and Shiga, p. 35). Kondo says he withdrew from the executive committee of his own volition because, with the birth of the party, his role was over (Kondo, pp. 181-83).

charge that in Moscow I had plotted to force Sakai out of the party, with the result that I was suspended from an official position for two years. My trial was held while I was in Shanghai reporting on the inaugural rally of the Japanese Communist Party. When I returned and heard about it, I strongly protested the decision, and the party cancelled the sentence. The matter was finally settled on the condition that neither I nor the Gyomin people would become central committee members.¹³

The convention also discussed the need to establish “cells” in order to provide a solid foundation for the party. The Fourth Congress of the Comintern had declared that no communist party could be regarded as “a serious and solidly organized mass communist party” unless it had “stable” communist cells in the factories, plants, mines, and railroads.¹⁴ The convention, aware of this dictum, appointed a number of members to be cell leaders, including Kondo, Takatsu, Sano Manabu, Inomata, Nishi, Ichikawa Yoshio, Koiwai, Yamamoto, Tadokoro, Tsujii, Takano, and Kawauchi.¹⁵ However, despite the party’s good intentions, the cells that were formed were little more than personal factions centering around the leading figures of the study and discussion groups, publication circles, and labor unions.

DISCUSSION OF THE PLATFORM

The Japanese Communist Party formally considered the draft platform at a special meeting held on March 15 at Shakujii, a suburb of Tokyo.¹⁶ Twenty-three members were present; Inomata served as chairman and Takase as secretary.* Prior to the meeting, the party, which was disturbed by the draft platform, had appointed a special political committee composed of Sano Manabu (chairman), Nosaka, Arahata, Takatsu, Sugiura, and Watanabe Masanosuke to attempt to reconcile the draft platform with the conditions of Japanese society. The deliberations of this group accomplished very little, however, and according to Takase’s notes, Sakai, in his opening remarks to his colleagues at the Shakujii meeting, stated that “the platform shows ignorance of conditions in Japan, and we have too many doubts to adopt it as it is.”

The discussions at the meeting focused on two major topics (1) revo-

* According to Tateyama, the following party members were present: Sakai, Kondo, Sano Manabu, Takatsu, Tashiro, Urata, Watanabe Masanosuke, Sugiura, Ueda, Takase, Yoshikawa, Nakasone, Nosaka, Nishi, Inomata, Koiwai, Arahata, Tsujii, Ichikawa Yoshio, Kawauchi, Tadokoro, Yamamoto, and Watanabe Mitsuzo (Tateyama, pp. 112-21). *Nihon Rodo Nenkan—1924*, p. 605, has almost the same list, the only exception being Takano instead of Tadokoro. Nabeyama has incorrectly dated the convention November 1922 (Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 61).

lutionary strategy, including the question of the abolition of the imperial system, and (2) political action tactics. The debate concerning the nature of the coming revolution was heated, and no conclusion was reached. Sano Manabu, who had attempted to draft another platform, maintained that in view of the rapidly changing conditions in Japan, the revolution would have to be a proletarian one. He was supported by Watanabe Masanosuke, Yamamoto, and Sugiura. Another group upheld the Comintern line that there would first have to be a bourgeois-democratic revolution in which workers and peasants would play the key roles. Tadokoro took still another position, arguing that because of the weakness of organized labor, the petty bourgeoisie, using the peasantry as a base, would carry out the first stage of the revolutionary process.¹⁷

The position of the emperor posed a special problem for the party. Sakai tried to prevent consideration of the provision in the draft platform that called for the abolition of the imperial system, maintaining that the question of the emperor was already well understood. Like most of the older bolshevists, he had been careful to avoid any discussion of the emperor, and mindful of the past, warned that such a discussion might unnecessarily create "victims." Some of the younger party members, however, had no qualms about attacking the imperial institution.¹⁸ Sakai had the support of Sano, Yamamoto, Sugiura, and Watanabe Masanosuke, but Inomata, as chairman, maintained that the party had to deliberate the matter. In the end, the members approved the demand for the abolition of the imperial system as a key objective, but they decided not to include it in any statement of policy concerning immediate action. (Takase decided to delete the discussion of this point from his notes; had he not done so, the government charges against the communists arrested in June 1923 would probably have been much more serious, perhaps comparable to those in the High Treason Case of 1911.)

As for a political action program, there was general agreement that it was necessary to establish a legal party based upon workers and peasants. The party members saw no contradiction in the existence of both a Communist Party and a legal mass party, though they could not agree on the role a mass party should play in the revolutionary process described in the draft platform. How the Communist Party was to be related organizationally to such a party was a question that was left unanswered. This was perhaps a reflection of Yamakawa's failure to relate the vanguard to a united proletarian party.

The most pressing political issue that confronted the party was that

of the universal suffrage movement, but no consensus was reached at the meeting. Sakai, for example, favored participation in the universal suffrage movement and representation by a legal proletarian party in the Diet. Sano opposed this view and advocated a boycott of the movement. The support for Sakai's position—the more popular of the two—came largely from those who, like Tokuda, were anxious to follow the lead of the Comintern, and those who, like Akamatsu, leaned toward the social democratic position of reform through parliamentary action. The opposition to participation in the universal suffrage movement came largely from the followers of Yamakawa.¹⁹

Yamakawa's views—particularly his views on political action—were the single most important Japanese ideological influence in the party. He stated his position clearly in an article in the February-March issue of *Vanguard*.²⁰ He began the article by discussing possible lines of political action the proletariat might take. He conceded that there was no reason why the proletariat should not use parliamentary action, as long as its sole purpose was opposition to the political power of the bourgeoisie. However, he was unable to overcome his anarcho-syndicalist heritage, and he made it clear that he did not advocate parliamentary action:

To enter parliament is not necessarily the only way to fight the political power of the bourgeoisie. . . . Sometimes, it is more effective not to enter parliament. . . . In the circumstances now existing in Japan, I, for one, believe that to abstain from voting, to boycott voting, provides more effective political opposition than voting. But there is one condition: abstention must mean something more than simple political indifference or negative rejection; there must be a prospect that it will grow into a positive mass movement.

The most effective political action the proletariat could take, he concluded, was “direct” political action.

GOVERNMENT SUPPRESSION

Unable to reach agreement at the Shakuji meeting, the leaders of the party decided to defer further discussion of the draft platform until another special meeting in April.* (This second meeting was not held, however.) The contents of the platform were to be kept secret. According to Nabeyama, mention of the platform was forbidden, even

* It is Nabeyama's recollection that the party implied in a report to the Comintern that it had adopted the draft platform (Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 62).

in a secret party document.²¹ Yamakawa has claimed that it was not discussed in his cell, and that he heard only vague references made to it. He says that he first saw it in 1927 or 1928, when he came across a collection of platforms of communist parties published in France.²²

Before the party, which had grown to include some 100 members, could complete its deliberations on the platform and decide on revolutionary strategy and a basic political action policy, the omnipresent and watchful police learned of its existence and in June apprehended most of its key members. The series of events that culminated in the June "roundup" and the September "white terror" began with the "Waseda University Incident" in May.

The Home Ministry tended to regard Waseda University as a haven for "red" professors and students, and it ordered the police to watch the activities of suspected campus organizations carefully. In addition, it encouraged the development of a countermovement on the campus. This countermovement, led by the Military Affairs Study Group (Gunji Kenkyudan) and supported by such right-wing organizations as the Taika Society (Taikakai), backed a government plan to introduce military instruction into the middle and higher schools; left-wing organizations opposed the plan. Feelings on the subject ran high on the Waseda campus, and the threat of a violent confrontation grew. A clash finally came on May 15, when the Military Affairs Study Group passed a resolution demanding that the university expel "red" professors. Left-wing student members of the Culture League and the Builders' League, who were attending a joint lecture by Sano Manabu and Inomata, rushed to the meeting of the study group, and bloody rioting ensued.

The police, who were already investigating Sano, intensified their search for information about his activities. They discovered a number of Japanese Communist Party documents, including the constitution, the draft platform, and the attendance list and minutes of the Shakujii meeting. Sano had kept these materials in his study at Waseda, but after the student riot he moved them to the house of one Shibuya Mokutaro, who was connected with the Japan General Federation of Miners, of which Sano was an adviser. Despite this precaution, the police got hold of the documents and immediately began to plan a general roundup of known or suspected communists.* The

* There are several versions of how this happened. The generally accepted one is that Shibuya attracted the attention of the police by singing radical songs while drunk, and a search of his home uncovered the documents. Sano's account is substantially the same (Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 112). According to Koyama Matsukichi, an informer

party members waited for the inevitable arrests. It is quite clear that the Japanese communists, for all their bold talk and writing, were thoroughly untrained in the methods of conspiratorial work, and had not yet succeeded in creating an underground apparatus that would function efficiently.

The expected blow fell on June 5, when the police apprehended some 50 members of the party. (The newspapers reported that Yamakawa, who had been at his home in Kurashiki since late May, was among those arrested, and that he was sent to Tokyo; the fact is that he was busy writing several articles and went to Tokyo of his own accord June 7.) Thirty party members were brought to trial under the Public Peace Police Law. Yamakawa's case was dismissed for lack of evidence, but the other men were found guilty and received sentences of from eight to ten months. However, they did not enter prison until the sentences were confirmed by the high court in April 1926, and even then they did not serve full terms, because of a general amnesty granted in honor of the Taisho emperor, who died that year. Many of them were released on bail, and continued to be active in the communist movement during the intervening years. In some cases, they even left the country for short periods of time.²³ Among those who appealed were Sakai, Yoshikawa, Urata, Hashiura, Sugiura, and Ueda, who received ten-month sentences, and Tokuda, Takano, Koiwai, Inomata, Tadokoro, Nishi, Nosaka, Takase, and the Ichikawa brothers (Shoichi and Yoshio), who received eight-month sentences. Among the small number of party members who did not appeal were Nakasone, Kawauchi, Tashiro, and the two Watanabes.

A few party members escaped the dragnet. Among them were Sano and Kondo, who fled to Shanghai and ultimately to Moscow, where they served as representatives to the Comintern and Profintern, respectively. Yamamoto, Takatsu, and Tsujii also fled the country, but shortly thereafter returned to Japan, gave themselves up, were tried, and received sentences similar to those of their comrades.²⁴ The party was in disarray, but it was not completely destroyed. Its affairs were

showed the documents to the police (see Ministry of Justice, *Nihon Shakaishugi*, p. 90). For a time there was a rumor among the communists that Kondo was the informer. Kondo later acknowledged that he met a police official in a restaurant, but he denied that he acted as an informer (Kondo, pp. 187ff). The most reliable version is probably that provided in the biography of Aso Hisashi, then leader of the miners' federation. According to this account, the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Board used Shibuya and several of his relatives as police spies (Kawakami Jotaro, pp. 256-57). Fukumoto supports this version (Fukumoto, *Kakumei Undo Razo*, p. 67).

turned over to a group of "caretakers" who had escaped detection, largely because they had not attended the Shakujii meeting. They included Akamatsu, Kawai, Kitahara Tatsuo, Sano Fumio, and Yohena Tomotaro.²⁵

The government, especially the Home Ministry, which wanted new legislation to establish stronger controls over "subversives," made every effort at the time of the arrests to inculcate a fear of communism in the public. A number of officials made public pronouncements that equated communism with terrorism. They intimated through the press that a major assassination plot against the cabinet had been uncovered. However, this was not true of all government officials. Spokesmen for the Ministry of Justice indicated that the ministry was not alarmed, and officials of the Ministry of Education played down the influence of left-wing ideas on university campuses.²⁶

The two leading intellectual monthlies—*Reconstruction* and *Central Review* (*Chuo Koron*)—devoted a number of pages to the arrests in their July issues. Yamakawa was one of the contributors to the *Reconstruction* issue.²⁷ In his article, he criticized the manner in which the arrests were reported and the way the police were using the press. He noted the effect of the arrests on the people outside the cities:

What I felt during my visit to the countryside was social unrest and the uneasiness that accompanies it. This uneasiness, which is an indirect reflection of the instability of capitalism, now in the period of decline, is overflowing among the masses both in farm villages and small towns. They are seeking for something . . . but do not know what.

I was able to witness the inner workings of the minds of people at the very moment that news of the communist roundup reached them. If it was the plan of the authorities to [make propaganda for the Communist Party], it is safe to say that the recent arrests were more successful than could be expected. The government and the Metropolitan Police Board, in mobilizing newspapers throughout Japan, are indelibly stamping the word "communism" in the minds of the masses. . . . The Metropolitan Police Board has stated that the communists engage in propaganda with money they have received from Russia; the board is propagating communism with money collected from the people as taxes.

The arrests were, of course, a great blow to the hopes of the Comintern. The Third Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee, which convened in Moscow on June 12, expressed its "deep sympathy" for the Japanese communists, and pledged to support them. It called

on Japan's workers "to carry on the task commenced by the imprisoned communists who fell victims in the fight for working-class interests, and to develop a strong movement against the insidious conspiracy of the militarist and bureaucratic government."²⁸ The Comintern leaders proposed the establishment of a legal communist party in Japan. Arahata, who was attending the plenum, opposed such a step.* He must have been incredulous when Zinoviev spoke as follows:

The Japanese comrades are convinced that only an illegal communist party can continue for any length of time in Japan. They do not even wish to hear about the organization of a legal party. . . . I realize, of course, that Comrade Aoki [Arahata] knows the Japanese situation much better than we do, but we do know that strong political unrest is now apparent in Japan. A large number of the bourgeoisie are in strong opposition to the existing regime. The idea of a rapprochement with Soviet Russia is one of the most popular ideas in Japan. Workers' strikes follow one after another, so that a wave of strikes spreads through the entire country. How then can we imagine that under such circumstances an attempt to legalize the communist movement in Japan is destined to failure? . . . We shall insist that our Japanese comrades learn a lesson from the American Communist Party, and try to organize a legal communist party in Japan.²⁹

Arahata was bold enough to take up the challenge. He replied:

Japanese comrades are not afraid of persecution and imprisonment. During the last thirteen years they have become accustomed to repression. But in my opinion, it is premature to organize a legal political party. Japanese comrades need the support and sympathy of the active elements of the working class. These elements have been indifferent to political problems; they are inexperienced, and their political horizon is very limited. Even the present leaders of the Yuaikai are beginning to lose their influence on account of their reformist tendencies. Must we form a party and risk losing the support of the active elements in the working class? The syndicalist workers have been against the communist movement for the very reason that the latter became involved in politics. If we form a [legal] party, we shall suffer defeat, at least in the course of the next several years. It is important [first] to educate the workers in politics before we organize them into a political party.³⁰

* Arahata had been named at the Shakujii meeting to represent the party at the plenum. Kondo had been nominated first because of his language ability, but had declined on the grounds that he was not a member of the party's executive committee and that he had blundered at Shimonoseki. Arahata left for Moscow in late March. According to him, his primary task was to report formally on the establishment of the Japanese Communist Party, which he maintains was not formally recognized by the Fourth Congress of the Comintern (Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, p. 311).

The Japanese police made an even more effective reply to Zinoviev's proposal for a legal party: they continued their relentless drive against the communists and other radicals. In July 1923, they rounded up a group of 13 called the Nagoya Section of the Communist Party, and two months later they smashed a group with 14 persons in Gunma Prefecture, led by a member of the Builders' League. Later, in March 1924, they arrested the members of a third group, the so-called Nagano Communist Party, a local branch of the Communist Youth League.³¹

The full weight of government suppression of the extreme left was brought to bear during the confusion and tension that followed the great earthquake of September 1, 1923—a period known as the “white terror.”³² On September 4, the police at Kamedo in Tokyo seized nine members of the militant Nankatsu Labor Union, including Kawai, who was then chairman of the Communist Youth League, and Hirasawa Keishiichi, an anarchist and novelist, and had them bayoneted and beheaded. Two days later, Osugi, his mistress Ito Naoe, and a seven-year-old nephew were murdered at military police headquarters in Tokyo.

In the view of many Japanese historians and commentators, Osugi's murder symbolizes the end of anarchism as an important force in Japanese intellectual circles, and in the labor movement.³³ Osugi's followers continued to maintain some labor support, notably in the printers' unions and in the free federations of unions they were able to establish in the Kanto and Kansai areas, but the number of workers involved was small. The collapse of the anarchist movement came in 1935, when one of their small groups robbed a bank, precipitating a nationwide roundup of the members of anarchist groups.

The Comintern reaction was predictable. Its executive committee called the workers of Japan and of the whole world to action, asking:

Is it possible to imagine a more frightful example of imperialist contempt and hatred of the working class than that which we observe today in Japan? How long will the working masses of Japan tolerate the yoke of the Japanese imperialist government? . . . Truly, the Japanese workers have nothing to lose but their chains!

The Communist International calls upon Japanese workers regardless of party to form a United Committee of Action to establish a united front against the imperialist government. From now on, the imperialist government of Japan must not have a moment's peace. The just indignation of the working masses of Japan must be expressed in an organized struggle against the present regime. . . . The Japanese labor movement must not decline as a result of the catastrophe; it must mount to the greatest heights!³⁴

GOVERNMENT CONCESSIONS

The Japanese government and the conservative forces that it represented realized that concessions to popular movements were necessary if the growth of the leftist movements was to be checked. They could see obvious advantages in balancing the "whip" with "candy," as Japanese historians have put it, to placate the rising demand for parliamentary democracy and, at the same time, neutralize the more moderate elements of the left. Accordingly, on October 16 the cabinet announced its support of universal male suffrage, and appointed a committee to prepare the necessary legislation. The public began to believe that universal suffrage would soon be enacted.

The government also made a significant concession to labor by agreeing to revise the method that permitted it to appoint delegates to the conferences of the International Labor Organization arbitrarily. Under the new arrangement, each union of 1,000 or more members was invited to nominate one representative and two counselors to run in a labor election to name a panel of three representatives and six counselors; from this panel, the government would select one representative and two counselors to attend each conference. As a result of this change, in March 1924 Sodomei reversed its position on the ILO, which it had denounced as an instrument of capitalist suppression.³⁵ Under the new procedures, Suzuki Bunji, the Sodomei chairman, was named to represent Japanese labor at the Sixth ILO Conference in 1924. This shift by the government was encouraging to labor moderates, for although no labor law had yet been enacted, the government had given tacit recognition to organized labor.³⁶

The policies of "whip" and "candy" had a tremendous impact on the left-wing movement in general, and on Sodomei in particular. The moderates had been profoundly disturbed by the extent of the communist penetration into mass organizations. Now, in view of the suffrage announcement made by the government, which raised new hopes for political action within a parliamentary framework, some in Sodomei condemned abstention from voting as a form of extremism as unrealistic and damaging to the labor movement as anarcho-syndicalist direct action had been. They felt, moreover, that in view of the many problems created by the earthquake, this was hardly the time for militancy. The central committee of Sodomei consequently resolved to "exercise the right to vote when universal suffrage is

effected"—a stand that sounded the death knell of the policy of revolutionary abstention.

The Japanese communists had also been divided over the issue of abstention, but now even Yamakawa and his followers were ready to change their position.³⁷ Yamakawa matter-of-factly gave the reasons for the defeat of the abstention theory:

One reason is certainly the fact that the place of the peasant movement within the proletarian movement has rapidly become greater; consequently, there is greater emphasis on the conditions and needs of the peasantry. This development has either consciously or unconsciously affected the labor unions. . . .

At any rate, an overwhelming majority of the organized proletariat (labor unions and tenant farmers) has come around to the idea of using the right to vote if universal suffrage is put into practice, a fact that decisively proves the impossibility of an abstention movement. . . . A positive mass abstention movement is . . . possible only when a small number of organized workers and peasants lead the proletarian masses. However, the majority of workers' and peasants' unions have already decided to use the right to vote.

He continued to believe, however, that the Japanese bourgeoisie would not have "the opportunity to complete political democracy," citing three reasons for this judgment: (1) the Japanese bourgeoisie had established its power by combining with the remnants of medieval autocracy, and had lost the revolutionary spirit of a new class; (2) Japan had no economic basis for the development of political liberalism and democracy: Japanese capitalism had reached the stage of imperialism; and (3) the Japanese bourgeoisie had absolutely no loyal supporters and was constantly threatened by the rise of an increasingly class-conscious proletariat.

Yamakawa warned that the democratization of political forms would not necessarily result in the achievement of true democracy. He pointed out that even under the proposals the government was expected to make at the next session of the Diet, i.e., extension of the franchise, liberalized labor union policies, and partial revision of the Public Peace Police Law, a parliamentary representative could still be prosecuted for making a speech at a labor union convention—"a condition that is inconceivable outside Japan." "Is this progress toward political freedom, or retrogression?" he asked. "Democratization of political forms and autocratic government are not incom-

patible," he asserted. "Indeed, when a bourgeoisie that has lost the spirit of liberalism and has become reactionary makes use of people with progressive policies to maintain political power, it almost always tries to take back with one hand what it has given with the other. Accordingly, there can be no assurance that such accumulated liberties will lead to the completion of political democracy."

Nor did Yamakawa have much confidence in the petty bourgeoisie. While noting that "today's democracy and political progressivism is nothing but an expression of the discontent, if not revolt, of the petty bourgeoisie and middle classes that capitalist development has brought about," he acknowledged that the petty bourgeois political force would expand in opposition to the big capitalists because "this is an inevitable feature of capitalist development." Yet he remained convinced that this was no reason to believe that political democracy could be completed by the petty bourgeois forces, because the petty bourgeoisie had no sense of historical mission, no revolutionary spirit. He concluded therefore that "the rising political movement of petty bourgeois democracy, like the liberal democratic movement of the bourgeoisie in the past, will more or less end in compromise. . . . The petty bourgeoisie will be more conciliatory and become an emasculated force that constantly fluctuates between the parties of the bourgeoisie and the proletarian party."

In the final analysis, said Yamakawa, the proletariat was the key to democratization. The main task, then, was "to unify the whole proletariat into an independent political force to prevent its assimilation by petty bourgeois democracy." He continued, "A certain degree of political liberalism and democracy is necessary for the maturity of the proletariat as a class. To that extent—to that extent only—the proletariat has a common interest with the petty bourgeoisie and can make use of a petty bourgeois party. But the proletarian movement must act as an independent political force."

Quite clearly, the proletariat's attitude toward universal suffrage was crucial. Yamakawa announced his support of a proletarian party movement to oppose bourgeois political forces by using suffrage rights. What kind of party did he have in mind? He maintained that a proletarian party, based primarily on workers and peasants, would have to formulate policies that related to actual conditions in Japanese society; consequently, it would have a platform that would be "far short of a broad revolutionary platform." Herein lay what Yamakawa saw

as the dilemma of the Japanese proletarian movement, for "the more inclusive the proletarian party is, the greater the danger that its political movement might stray from the main current of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and fall into mere reformist parliamentarianism."

The prospects raised by the promise of universal suffrage and the persuasive arguments of Yamakawa caused many left-wing intellectuals and unionists to accept the idea of establishing a lawful proletarian political party. In November 1923, Sodomei created a political bureau under the leadership of Akamatsu, and its leaders began to consult with representatives of other organizations. Another group that was active was the Society for the Study of Political Problems (Seiji Mondai Kenkyukai), which was formed in December to serve as a forum for discussions regarding a workers' and peasants' party. It was composed largely of left-wing intellectuals, including Akamatsu, Abe, Shimanaka Yuzo, Suzuki Mosaburo, Oyama, Takahashi Kamekichi, and Aono.

Communists like Nabeyama, Kokuryo, Nakamura, and Taniguchi, who were still active in Sodomei, continued to attack the union's reformist elements, insisting that they were delivering the labor movement into the hands of the capitalists. It soon became clear, however, that although they urged that Sodomei develop more militant political programs, they, too, were ready to take advantage of concessions made by the government.* In a compromise declaration approved by the Sodomei convention in February 1924, both leftists and rightists agreed to utilize practical, reformist policies to meet the needs of the labor movement, especially "to turn it from the movement of a minority to a mass movement." They recognized that though they could not hope for the liberation of the working class through a bourgeois parliament, they could obtain partial political benefits by exercising the right to vote after universal suffrage was effected. However, they concluded that "whatever changes may take place in our policies to meet practical needs, there will be no change whatsoever in the underlying revolutionary spirit of the proletariat."³⁸

* Tanaguchi has stated that "while the leaders were thinking of adapting the proletarian movement to the more liberal attitude of the government capitalists, the militant unionists—the left-wing extremists—sought to take the opportunity to raise issues on which they had been taking a negative stand because of the influence of syndicalism, for instance universal suffrage as a demand of the working masses, thereby enabling them to advance their cause vigorously" (Taniguchi, I, 62).

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE PARTY

Suppression, especially the June 1923 arrests of party members, and the government's concessions, especially the prospect of universal suffrage—in short, the government's policies of “whip” and “candy”—ultimately forced the dissolution of the Japanese Communist Party. When Arahata returned to Japan in November 1923, he found that talk about dissolution was common.³⁹ Ichikawa Shoichi later alleged that this situation was simply a reflection of the “shameless petty bourgeois” character of the party's leadership, and that the party members of the working classes “opposed the decision to dissolve the party and protested against it.”⁴⁰ One of the main objects of his scorn was Akamatsu, who was actively promoting “reform through legal means” in Sodomei, along with such moderates as Suzuki Bunji, Matsuoka Komakichi, Nishio Suehiro, and Aso Hisashi, all of whom were later active in various social democratic parties. During the Sodomei convention in February 1924, Akamatsu and Nosaka met with Watanabe Masanosuke, Sugiura, Kokuryo, Taniguchi, Nakamura, and Nabe-yama; Akamatsu took the lead in persuading them not to rebuild the party. He is reported to have said that they could operate effectively without a party, and to have insisted that dissolution was the only way to get rid of such ambitious fellows as Tokuda, Takatsu, and Kondo.⁴¹ Others offered different reasons for the party's dissolution. For example, Sano Fumio, Nosaka, and Arahata attributed it to the low morale and inactivity caused by the repressive acts of the government, as well as to the increased factionalism in the party, and Tokuda has singled out the intellectual character of the party leadership.

Although there is some disagreement regarding the attitudes of various party members toward the party's dissolution, there can be no doubt that Yamakawa and Sakai no longer saw a need for an illegal communist party. The influence of Yamakawa was probably decisive. He argued that it was necessary to concentrate upon the development of mass organizations like labor unions, peasant unions, and student associations. He was convinced that an illegal party could not do this effectively because it tended to separate the vanguard from the masses and to invite suppression by the state. He advised his followers to work through mass organizations and a legal proletarian party to create conditions for a mass communist party at a later date. Yamakawa saw the source of political mass action in the process of capitalist development, in effect, eliminating the need for a Leninist communist party.

The final decision to dissolve the party was reached in February 1924 at a meeting attended by Arahata, Tokuda, Nosaka, Ichikawa Shoichi, and Sano Fumio. (Arahata, Tokuda, Nosaka, and Sano, among others, had attended a similar meeting earlier in the month.) It was agreed that a small bureau would be established to settle party affairs. According to Sano, there was some expectation that the dissolution of the party, which was in a state of complete disintegration, would pave the way for a new party—one that would not be “alienated from the masses” and “reduced to factionalism.”⁴² Arahata, probably the only one to oppose dissolution to the very end, expressed much the same view: “The party has been made up of personalities, not organized on the basis of the masses, from the first, and this has led to factionalism. Since this partisanship is now an obstacle to the development of the movement, the party should be dissolved at once, so that individuals may work for the expansion of mass movements in their respective spheres of activity and rebuild on that basis.”⁴³

The party was formally dissolved at a meeting held in early March at Morigasaki, near Tokyo. The caretaking group and some of the arrested members who were free on bail attended.⁴⁴ According to Arahata, who was present, they were Ichikawa Shoichi, Aono, Sano Fumio, Sakai, and Tokuda.⁴⁵ Arahata was asked to go to Shanghai to report the dissolution to the representatives of the Comintern. He reluctantly consented and proceeded to Shanghai in early summer with the intention of going on to Moscow to get new instructions, but after he made contact with Comintern agents at Shanghai, he changed his travel plans because of illness, and returned to Japan.⁴⁶

The life of the First Communist Party was a very short and unsettled one. The state destroyed its organization, and the appeal of social democracy, which the party helped in part to revive, undercut its pretensions to exclusive leadership of the masses. But the party itself suffered from certain basic weaknesses. It was not a unified body with a concrete platform, but was instead an amalgam of personal factions whose members could not agree on the strategy and tactics of revolution. Moreover, despite the slogan “Into the Masses,” the party had not developed to the point where it was based on mass organizations of workers and peasants. Arahata, in a later discussion of the party’s inability to reach agreement on the major issues raised by the draft platform, pointed out these same weaknesses. “Nobody considered how to put [the platform] into practice in concrete terms. . . . Party structure was not developed to the point where it was based on mass

organizations of the working class, but had remained a mere extension of earlier intellectual groups. Although Zinoviev said that the Japanese party was not like the social democratic parties of Europe, but was from the first a united group of communists, small but powerful, the lack of experience in a mass movement and the lack of a popular basis were fatal weaknesses of the party."⁴⁷

Yamakawa recognized these "fatal weaknesses" and began to search for ways to make the communist movement more effective. He was the first among the communist leaders to recognize that the strategy and tactics of the Comintern would not work in Japan. He saw that with the enactment of universal suffrage, communism would not be able to stand aloof from the movement to establish legal proletarian political parties. Communism, he believed, would have to join that movement and seek to influence it from within. There was simply no place for an illegal Japanese Communist Party. The role of communism would be determined by existing conditions, making the crucial factors the level of the political consciousness of the masses, the extent to which political power was distributed among the classes, and the degree to which the communist vanguard could formulate strategy and tactics empirically.

It is difficult to resist the temptation to speculate about how the communist and left-wing movements in Japan might have developed, if the views of Yamakawa had prevailed among Japan's communists. Certainly the fate of party members would have been very different, and much of the factionalism of the left-wing movement as a whole would have been avoided. A united socialist movement would undoubtedly have had greater appeal to workers and peasants, and would therefore have presented a more serious challenge to the conservative order, though it is doubtful that even a united movement could have generated enough strength to topple that order.

The party's dissolution placed the Comintern in an awkward position. The Fourth Congress had just publicized the founding of the party. The Fifth Congress, scheduled to meet in June 1924, would be faced with the recognition of its demise.

The Bureau and the Group, 1924-1926

As previously noted, when the Japanese Communist Party was dissolved in March 1924, a small bureau was established to transact the party's unfinished business with the Comintern and to maintain contact with representatives of mass organizations. The factionalism that characterized the party was carried over into the bureau. From the outset there were bitter clashes of personality and strong differences of opinion among the bureau members—Arahata, Tokuda, Sano Fumio, Aono, and Kitahara—regarding the role to be played by the bureau in the various left-wing movements. Arahata and Tokuda had little love for each other,* but they stood together as the bureau's "action group," in the sense that they urged that the bureau play a positive role in mass organizations. They tended to regard the bureau as the nucleus of a new and more effective communist party that was needed to give direction to left-wing movements. Opposing them were Sano and Aono, the so-called "advocacy group."¹ Like Yamakawa and Sakai, Sano and Aono wanted to limit activity to the propagation of communist theory and to the stimulation of discussion of communism's application to conditions in Japan. For a time, expediency dictated that the latter view prevail.

The first important step taken by the bureau was to inaugurate publication of *Marxism* (*Marukusushugi*) in May 1924 under the editorship of Nishi. The editor's postscript to the first issue explained the character and purpose of the new monthly:

We wish to see this magazine remain, to the last, one for study. Socialism is, however, the thought of the proletarian class, and Marxism is the theory of class strife. The wish to promote the class struggle must accompany any study of socialism or Marxism. In this sense, we hope the studies in this magazine will not divorce themselves from the actual movement, but will provide flesh and blood for the militant proletariat as far as possible.²

* Arahata was outspoken in his criticism of what he regarded as a scandalous handling of money by Tokuda. (He was critical of Kondo for similar reasons.) It is interesting that he has drawn analogies with the similar propensities of the Meiji oligarchs and the leaders of the democratic movement (Arahata, *Kyosanto*, p. 47).

The first 13 issues of *Marxism* were largely devoted to translations and summaries of the works of Engels, Lenin, Bukharin, and Stalin, as well as to analyses of Marx by veterans like Sakai and by younger theorists like Inomata and Fukumoto Kazuo.³ However, the first issue carried an article by Takahashi Sadaki entitled "The Development of Japanese Imperialism,"* and with the publication of the June 1925 issue, which focused on the factional feuding and split in Sodomei, there were an increasing number of articles attempting to analyze the development of modern Japanese society. Of special interest is a series of articles in which Shiga Yoshio, a young contributing editor of *Marxism*, and Akamatsu, who held a key post in Sodomei as head of the political department, engaged in a bitter debate over theory.⁴

The publication of *Marxism* was only one example of a general concern on the part of left-wing groups to spread socialist ideas in anticipation of universal suffrage. Advocates of social reform like Abe and Shimanaka, joined in April 1924 to found the Japan Fabian Society and began to publish *Studies in Socialism* in May. In June, the Society for Political Studies (Seiji Kenkyukai), which had previously been known as the Society for the Study of Political Problems, established an organizational framework for the purposes of educating the masses and assisting in the formation of a proletarian political party. It was soon apparent, however, that the society was split into two wings. Shimanaka, Takahashi Kamekichi, and Kagawa represented the right wing, which favored the views of the British Labour Party, and Aono, Suzuki Mosaburo, and Kuroda Hisao represented the left wing, which adhered closely to the ideas of Yamakawa, who continued to warn against "reformism" and "parliamentarianism."⁵ The left wing tended to dominate, and after September 1924 the moderates began to withdraw. Later, the society was infiltrated by communists and then dominated by them. It had an amazing growth, and by April 1925 included some 4,000 workers, peasants, students, white-collar workers, and professionals in over 50 branches throughout the country. Its journal, *Political Studies* (*Seiji Kenkyu*), analyzed political, economic, and

* Takahashi discussed Japan's transition from feudalism to capitalism and attempted to explain why the Japanese bourgeoisie had not been able to complete the democratization of Japan. First, it had been forced to compromise with feudal elements in the Meiji Restoration, largely because of its immaturity. Second, the pressure of world imperialism accelerated the transition of Japanese capitalism to the imperialist stage of development. Therefore, he asserted, there had been no stage of bourgeois democracy. In fact, quite the contrary: "The bourgeoisie and their feudal allies denigrate democratic ideas. Internally, their basic policies reflect extreme reaction, and externally, naked aggression" (Takahashi, "Nihon Teikokushugi").

social problems from the point of view of the working masses and discussed the need for a political party based on the interests of the masses.

The prevailing attitude of the left-wing movement was reflected in an article by Yamakawa that appeared in *Reconstruction* in January 1925. There he asserted that since the majority of the "proletarian elements" agreed that at the earliest possible opportunity they should seek to organize a political party "independent of the existing bourgeois political parties," the most fundamental problem in the matter of organizing a proletarian political party had been solved. He pointed out that three important problems remained, however: first, the problem of a platform; second, the problem of organization; and third, the problem of preventing the proliferation of small parties. "These three problems are related to each other; no clear distinction is possible. . . . We have only reached the point of studying, discussing, and making efforts to solve each of them."⁶

THE KATO CABINET

The question of the establishment of a legal proletarian party became an immediate issue when the Kato cabinet, which assumed office in June 1924, kept its promise to persuade the Diet to pass a universal manhood suffrage bill. The bill was introduced in February 1925 and quickly passed the House of Representatives. Anticipated strong opposition in the House of Peers failed to materialize in the face of overwhelming public support of the bill, and after a series of conferences between the two houses of the Diet, the Universal Suffrage Manhood Act became law on May 5, 1925. All tax qualifications for the right to vote were removed, quadrupling the electorate from 3.3 million to 14 million. The act contained some provisions that worked to the disadvantage of the left wing, however. The voting age was set at twenty-five, which disqualified the idealistic university students and young laborers and peasants, and the residence requirement of one year disqualified many factory workers and city dwellers whose family registrations remained in their native villages.

The Kato cabinet sponsored other social legislation that was welcomed by the moderate leftist elements, particularly those in labor unions. Under its leadership, the Diet abolished Article 17 of the Public Peace Police Law, which had made it illegal to strike and had in effect hindered the formation of labor unions. In addition, the Diet

passed a National Health Insurance Law, a Factory Law, and a Labor Disputes Conciliation Law.⁷ The cabinet was unable, however, to secure passage of a labor union bill forbidding employers from preventing their workers from organizing unions; opposition to the bill in the business and industrial community was simply too great.* There can be no doubt that the policies of the Kato ministry were in large part responsible for the fact that Sodomei, the leading labor federation, assumed a more cooperative attitude toward the government.

These great strides in the direction of democratic government and social reform were partially offset by the passage in April 1925 of the Peace Preservation Law, which was aimed at any group seeking radical alterations in the Japanese government or economic and social systems. The first article of the new law read: "Anyone who has formed a society with the objective of altering the national polity or the form of government, or denying the system of private ownership, or anyone who has joined such a society with full knowledge of its objects, shall be liable to imprisonment with or without hard labor for a term not exceeding ten years." A similar law introduced in the Diet in 1922 had failed to pass, and in 1923 the government had promulgated a temporary Peace Preservation Ordinance. The law of 1925, though passed largely to control communist and other radical activities, was used for much broader purposes. Its vagueness placed persons holding any of a wide range of opinions in jeopardy, and permitted suppression of the press, academic institutions, or any organization or activity critical of the status quo and supporting basic change. As the director of the criminal affairs bureau pointed out to the House of Representatives, the new law could be used against someone advocating amendment of the constitution. Thus, the major political parties in the period after 1924 showed that they could be as repressive as the bureaucratic administrations when they felt that the fundamental character of Japanese society was threatened. "Whip" and "candy"

* In 1925, the social affairs bureau of the Home Ministry announced the draft of a relatively progressive piece of legislation, whose main provisions were that unions would be required to register with the government, that an employer could not be a union member nor discharge employees for belonging to a union, that employment could not be made conditional upon an employee's withdrawal from a union, and that labor agreements would be legally valid. Employer groups were naturally antagonistic to the bill and argued that it would shatter Japan's industrial peace and destroy her industries in their infancy. Weaker drafts failed to pass the 1926 and 1927 Diet sessions. (A Labor Dispute Arbitration Law was passed in 1926, but was rarely invoked.) A labor union bill was approved by the House of Representatives in 1931, but it was killed by the more conservative House of Peers. A law protecting and encouraging the development of labor unions was not passed until 1945.

still characterized the basic approaches of the government toward the left-wing movement, and the communists had to remain secret and act with utmost care, while the socialists were forced to adopt moderate tactics.

THE SHANGHAI THESES

Meanwhile, the Comintern began to take steps to reestablish the Japanese Communist Party. In April 1924 it sent a message to Japan disapproving the party's dissolution; at the same time, it ordered Sano Manabu, Kondo, Takatsu, Tsujii, and Yamamoto, all of whom had been living in Vladivostok, to become active in the Japanese movement once again. Sano and Kondo were summoned to Moscow; Takatsu returned to Tokyo.⁸ A month later, the executive committee of the Comintern published a manifesto calling for the formation of a "Japanese Workers' and Peasants' Party independent of the bourgeois radicals." The manifesto urged the workers and peasants of Japan to adopt a program demanding democratic government, immediate adult suffrage without qualification, freedom for workers to strike and to bargain collectively, freedom of opinion and assembly, and "real freedom of the press."⁹

The Comintern did not publicly acknowledge the situation in Japan at its Fifth Congress, which was held in Moscow from June 17 to July 8, 1924. Its "Theses on Tactics" made no reference to the dissolution of the Japanese Communist Party,¹⁰ and Katayama Sen, in a brief report, proudly announced that with the formation of a legal political party—the Workers' and Peasants' Party—the Japanese proletariat would soon "take a new step forward in the arena of political struggle."¹¹ However, a special committee on Japan, which included Sano, Kondo, Katayama, and representatives from Great Britain, China, Germany, and the Soviet Union, could not ignore the facts of the situation. The committee officially opposed the dissolution and recommended that Sano return to Shanghai with Voitinsky to work for the reestablishment of the party.¹²

Voitinsky and Sano reached Shanghai in September 1924, and took up their task almost immediately. Kitahara visited them in October and reported that the bureau felt that it would be suicidal to reestablish the party. Voitinsky disagreed with this judgment, and sent Kitahara back to Japan to make known the views of the Comintern. Kitahara visited Shanghai again in December, and after conferring with

Voitinsky, returned to Japan with 10,000 yen to support the publication of a popular organ. He lost the money speculating in the rice market, however. Kitaura, in reporting the loss to Voitinsky later in December, expressed the willingness of the bureau members to meet with representatives of the Comintern at Shanghai to discuss the Japanese situation.¹³

In January 1925, Voitinsky, Sano Manabu, and possibly L. Heller, the Profintern representative at Shanghai, met in Shanghai with a delegation from Japan that included Arahata, Tokuda, Watanabe, Aono, and Sano Fumio. After a week of discussion, the conferees formulated a set of theses that condemned the dissolution of the Communist Party and outlined tactics for the communist bureau to follow in order to reestablish the party.*

These "Shanghai Theses" were unsparing in their criticism of the "dissolutionists." Yamakawa and Sakai, they maintained, "were for the most part separated from practical and organizational movements, lacked the experience and knowledge necessary to lead organizational activities, and were often subject to the influence of anarcho-syndicalism." Moreover, they and most of their followers "treated the theories of communism and proletarian revolution in a very idealistic and abstract manner, and failed to consider the political, economic, and social conditions for the purpose of directing the masses into the class struggle by means of revolutionary tactics." The theses continued:

There are fundamental reasons why the activities of the Japanese Communist Party failed to achieve a firm base in the masses, to lead mass movements into communist movements, and to advance the social situation of Japan to the revolutionary stage. In general, the communist movement was little more than a few empty words floating in the air that finally evaporated. . . . One reason for the party's collapse lies in the fact that the organizers of the party lacked sufficient understanding of ideology, as well as discipline, resolution, and knowledge regarding the revolutionary movement, especially the underground movement.

The theses also criticized the former party leaders for their division into factions based on personal relationships and their failure to adhere to Comintern direction. According to the theses, the Comintern had explained "more than once" that "the Japanese comrades should demand the democratization of Japan and expose the foundations of autocracy and of the remaining feudal forces," and that they should

* The full text of this document appears as Appendix B, pp. 283-92.

draw the masses of workers and peasants into the party. Enumerating the leaders' errors, the theses stated that the leaders failed

(a) to propagandize generally for the democratization of Japan and specifically for universal suffrage elections (while exposing to the masses the true character of bourgeois democracy), (b) to propagandize and agitate for the protection of the economic interests of workers and peasants on the basis of their immediate demands, (c) to begin agitation for the establishment of a worker-peasant party in conformity with the Comintern's direction, (d) to launch a campaign, on the one hand, to defend the economic and political interests of the poor and the peasants in the districts stricken by the great earthquake, and, on the other, to expose the class nature of the bureaucratic government, in conformity with the Comintern's direction, and (e) to establish a legal party organ for the masses at the proper time, and to set up the machinery for the printing and distribution of illegal documents.

The theses not only attacked Yamakawa and Sakai for their past failures, but also criticized them for postponing the organization of a communist party until autocracy was overthrown. This view, it was argued, was "opportunistic" because it relied on "spontaneous growth," which meant "adjusting to externals and following the lead of the revolutionary movement," instead of making strenuous efforts to bring the natural course of the growth of the revolutionary movement under communist control in order to turn it into a conscious effort "imbued with the communist spirit." According to the theses, the opportunism of the former party leaders stemmed from two fundamental errors. The first was their lack of understanding of the nature of the struggle against autocracy: "They do not understand that the proletariat, uniting with the peasants and rural workers, is the decisive factor in this struggle." The theses asserted that the history of various countries shows that the bourgeoisie tries "to use the masses of workers and peasants for its purposes" in the struggle against autocracy, then, "at the moment of the decisive clash," betrays the working masses and peasants and compromises with the very autocracy it has led the working classes to fight. Applying this theory to Japan—"where capitalism has reached the stage of monopoly economically and the stage of imperialism politically"—the theses concluded that "the time when the bourgeoisie betrays the workers and peasants will come earlier than in the capitalist countries of the West." This was the key to the role to be played by the proletariat and its vanguard, the Japanese Communist Party.

Accordingly, the struggle against autocracy in Japan and the results of the struggle will be determined by the question of who will prepare and organize the working masses for the struggle and who will lead them to the final fight against autocracy.

In the period after autocracy is overthrown, relations between social forces are not determined by democratic freedom, as a matter of form; on the contrary, they are determined by considerations of by whom and how the masses of workers and peasants are organized and by the extent to which the consciousness of class struggle or class antagonism is cultivated among them.

The second basic fault of the former party leaders, according to the theses, was their ignorance of how to combine legal and illegal methods: "They disregard the need for underground propaganda and agitation with the excuse that such activities are not feasible under present conditions in Japan." The theses continued: "We consider it a serious mistake . . . that the leading comrades in Japan failed to found an illegal press, along with a legal one, and to make efforts to educate the masses by this means."

What was to be learned from these two mistakes? The theses provided a clear answer: The bureau must immediately launch a program of propaganda and agitation among the masses that would advance the class struggle and the cause of communism, as well as "lay bare the true nature of bourgeois democracy." Simultaneously, the bureau must form cells and groups of communists and organize them into one communist party at the earliest possible date. The bureau was directed to establish three sections—an agitation and propaganda section to issue legal and illegal newspapers; an organizational section to rally and organize communist elements, establish cells in factories, workshops, tenant farmers' unions, and among revolutionary students and intellectuals, create a unit to print and distribute documents, and maintain contact with local organizations; and an information section to study problems and collect the materials needed for the propaganda campaign, work in Marxist groups, labor schools, workers' clubs, and legal political associations such as the Society for the Study of Politics, and take part in the work of the agitation and propaganda section.

The conferees decided that it was necessary to publish the theses in order to explain the "facts" about the dissolution of the party and to declare the "firm intention" of the new leaders to organize a communist party based on the principles enunciated in the theses. "This will help to sweep away all the rumors and slanders being spread by the

enemies of the communist movement." They also resolved that the bureau hold a convention of worker, peasant, and student delegates the following July to reestablish the party.

After the members of the bureau returned to Japan, some of them had second thoughts about the decisions made at Shanghai. Aono and Sano Fumio decided to withdraw from the bureau, in part because of personality clashes with Tokuda,¹⁴ but more importantly because of the influence of Yamakawa and Sakai, who regarded the Shanghai Theses as unrealistic and even dangerous.¹⁵ Their places and that of the discredited Kitahara were taken by Watanabe Masanosuke, Kitaura, and Sugiura. These changes had the effect of consolidating the leadership and can be regarded as a victory for the bureau's "action group."

LABOR ACTIVITIES

The communists were active on a number of fronts, but they found the going difficult, especially in the labor movement, where the right-wing leaders of Sodomei were vigilant and ready to expel them, if sufficiently provoked. For example, after the communists failed in a bid to gain control of Sodomei's Kanto federation in October 1924, the right-wing leaders forced Watanabe Masanosuke, Sugiura, Kawada, and several others out of the Kanto federation, and expelled the four local unions that they led.¹⁶ In announcing the unions' exclusion from membership, the leaders attacked the "utopian theories" of communism, branding them "unscientific and unrealistic." They urged that the labor movement be developed on the basis of "an understanding of the special circumstances of Japan and Japanese capitalism" and "not by reliance upon a few rash, infantile theories."* This action was later reviewed by the central committee of Sodomei, which decided that the four unions could continue their affiliation with the parent body. They were permitted to withdraw voluntarily from the Kanto federation, and in December formed the Kanto District Council of Sodomei (Nihon Rodo Sodomei Kanto Chiho Hyogikai). Short-

* In an article published in November, Akamatsu said: "We must know the Japanese nation as well as the universal principle of social evolution. What is worked out reasonably on the basis of knowledge of the two elements will constitute a genuinely scientific guide for the proletariat. Neither the Russian Revolution nor the British labor movement can serve directly as guides for the Japanese social movement. They should remain only as reference. Loose comparison or dogmatism is the enemy of the scientific spirit" (Akamatsu, "Kagakuteki Nihonshugi e").

ly thereafter, they began publishing *Labor News*, which took a strong class-struggle line.

The decision of Sodomei's central committee was meant to be a peace offering to the communists in order to ease the tension between the right and left wings of the labor movement. However, though it was a helpful face-saver, it was hardly a solution to a conflict that stemmed from fundamental philosophical differences. This became apparent when Sodomei held its annual convention at Osaka March 15-18. The convention was the scene of a bitter dispute. The moderates, with majority backing, advocated a policy of centralized, industrial unionism and support for the principles of social democracy. A radical minority, led by Nabeyama and Nakamura, both of whom were Kansai district representatives, had no quarrel with the moderates' approach to organization of the federation, but they vigorously attacked the "right-wing opportunism" of the federation's leaders, who in effect rejected the role of the militant communist vanguard. The need to engage labor in politics was not an issue; they agreed on that. The crucial issue was social democracy versus communism, or, as the communists interpreted it, whether the labor movement was to be reformist or revolutionary. The communists insisted that the principal difference between the reformists and the revolutionaries was not over the need for a day-to-day struggle based on the concrete demands of the working class, but whether or not the fundamental principle of class struggle underlying those demands should be recognized. According to the communists, the reformists, instead of transforming the demands of the masses into class struggles, were satisfied with attaining partial objectives.

The uncompromising, bitter nature of the debate was a clear indication that the two factions were unlikely to remain in the same organization. Each side maneuvered to strengthen its position. The right-wing members of the central committee, who obtained knowledge about the communists through Akamatsu, wanted to expel Nabeyama, Nakamura, Watanabe, Sugiura, Yamamoto, and Tsujii, but they could not obtain the required two-thirds majority. The communists, meanwhile, were endeavoring to establish a "reform movement" directed at diminishing the power of the right-wing leaders, and gained the support of some 25 unions. In retaliation, the right wing persuaded the central committee to order the dissolution of the communist-led Kanto district council on March 27. The communists tried to get the order rescinded, and the conflict reached its climax on

April 12, when the central committee refused to alter its stand. Representatives of the 25 unions met the following day and formed the League to Reform Sodomei (Nihon Sodomei Kakushin Domei) with headquarters at Osaka. The "Reform League" branded the central committee "class betrayers"; the committee answered by calling the dissidents "communists" and accusing them of "left-wing infantilism."

The situation in the labor movement was hardly in keeping with a resolution that had been passed at the Shanghai meeting calling on the communist bureau to "conform to the Profintern policy of a unified labor movement in which the left-wing and right-wing unions cooperate."¹⁷ Heller was naturally disturbed by the events in Japan and in May summoned Tokuda and Watanabe to Shanghai to discuss with him and Sano Manabu what steps should be taken regarding the Japanese labor movement. They relied upon a report prepared by Kondo, who had been assigned by the Profintern to study labor conditions in Japan.* The result of the meeting was a basic policy statement known as the "Heller Theses."¹⁸

In the theses, the errors of the Japanese communists in the labor movement were analyzed. The communists' fundamental mistake, according to the theses, was their failure to formulate a "revolutionary labor union theory." They were victims of "traditional unionism" or "opportunism," and simply did not know how to win over the working masses through "effective revolutionary daily struggles." The communists were accused of being more concerned with increasing the number of workers in unions than with the content of the revolutionary movement, or with the class struggle. The failure of the Reform League to take advantage of the revolutionary consciousness of young workers was cited as evidence for this judgment. What was needed was a properly balanced and integral relationship between the practical concerns of the labor movement and the movement's theoretical basis—the concept of class struggle. According to the theses, the communists in the Reform League tended to emphasize either one or the other, and not relate the two in any effective manner.

What, then, was the correct course? The theses put forward a series of immediate tasks. Most important, the Japanese communists were

* After the Fifth Comintern Congress, Kondo had remained in the Soviet Union until receiving this assignment. He maintains he was told by Voitinsky not to discuss party matters with anyone in Japan, and that he remained in the Osaka area for two months investigating union activities from outside party circles. Kondo claims that Voitinsky and others in the Profintern turned against him, and fearing for his future, he returned to Japan in 1926 and left the communist movement (Kondo, pp. 251-52, 270-74, 289-90).

directed to organize the working masses on the basis of their daily needs as a stage in the revolutionary struggle. They were to develop a concrete program consistent with the process of revolution in order to avoid the pitfalls of separation from the masses and opportunism. The goal was to be the creation of a national federation of industrial labor unions. The break with Sodomei had clearly been a mistake; it violated the policy of national federation and was a step in the direction of separation from the masses. The communists should struggle against the right-wing forces in Sodomei on all levels, as well as against the anarcho-syndicalist influences that sought to orient the labor movement toward "political neutralism."

The theses called for a vigorous communist indoctrination program. The Japanese communists were directed to publish a labor union paper for distribution among the masses of workers, which would emphasize practical questions of concern to workers and peasants, and a monthly journal (neither "superficial" nor "too abstract") for distribution to active union members, which would deal with communist theory and international problems. The peasants were also to be indoctrinated: the theses called on the Japanese communists in the labor movement to "guide the thinking of the peasant movement" and to establish organizational ties with peasant unions. The most important "slogans of the day" were as follows: "Conquest of the masses by means of a revolutionary day-to-day struggle based on realistic strategy"; "an end to unemployment"; "freedom to organize labor unions"; "completion of organization by industry"; "establishment of a national federation"; "immediate organization of a proletarian political party"; "condemnation of the coalition between the government and the capitalists"; "unification of the workers of the Far East"; and "establishment of a single, unified Labor Union International."

Despite the Profintern's instructions, it proved impossible to prevent a final split in Sodomei. The central committee of Sodomei, led by Akamatsu, Matsuoka, and Nishio, formally expelled the 25 "reform" unions on May 16. Joined by another seven unions, the outcast group formed the Japan Labor Union Council (*Nihon Rodo Kumiai Hyogikai*), or Hyogikai, during a meeting held at Kobe May 24-27. Hyogikai's 32 industrial and general unions had approximately 11,000 members; Sodomei's 35, some 19,500.¹⁹

A noncommunist, Noda Ritsuta, became chairman of Hyogikai's central committee of 17 members, but the communists, notably Nabe-yama, Yamamoto, Taniguchi, and Mitamura Shiro, tended to domi-

nate it. (Noda later became a communist.) The committee attacked Sodomei for "betraying the working class by drifting away from the spirit of the labor movement and . . . conciliating the capitalists." It declared that through organization and struggle the labor movement would oppose capitalist exploitation and win the complete emancipation of the working class. It formulated a practical action policy based on the immediate economic issues of wages, hours, and working conditions. In May 1925 the first Hyogikai convention passed resolutions on wages, insurance, and unemployment relief. Hyogikai's central committee insisted, however, that the struggle of the workers had to be transformed into a political class struggle.²⁰ The unions were to use economic issues to recruit the masses in order to train them politically in the struggle for power.*

The communists in Hyogikai were active both at home and abroad. By the end of the year, Hyogikai contained 59 unions with a membership of approximately 35,000 workers—making it approximately the same size as Sodomei. Following the policy guidelines of the Heller Theses, Hyogikai's communist leadership called for a national convention to establish a federation to include all unions. When Sodomei opposed the suggestion, the communists sharply attacked its "right-wing" and "bureaucratic" officers. On the foreign front, Hyogikai made no attempt to hide its support of the May 30th movement in China, and sent Mitamura and Yamamoto to Shanghai to confer with leaders of the Chinese General Council of Trade Unions. The two Japanese visitors were keen observers of Chinese strike tactics, and later applied in Japan some of the lessons they learned. They also made contacts at Shanghai that led to Hyogikai's subsequent participation in a Profintern-sponsored Pacific Labor Union Conference and the federation's affiliation with the Pan-Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat.

Hyogikai and its communist leaders were involved in a number of lengthy strikes during 1926. For example, Watanabe Masanosuke, Noda, Nakao Katsuo, who was chief of the union's Kanto regional division, and Ito Masanosuke, who was active in the communist youth

* Shiga wrote: "We demand reforms because, through these, we can radically change the political indifference of the masses and mobilize them into the forefront of the class struggle. We demand that the laws obstructing speech, assembly, and association be abolished and that social legislation be enacted, for we can conduct struggles more broadly and effectively if these are realized. In a country where many feudal elements are still in existence, the working class cannot skip democratic reforms and achieve a communist society immediately" (Shiga, "Futatabi," p. 37). In an article in the March 1, 1925, issue of *Labor News*, Watanabe Masanosuke insisted that this policy should not be confused with reformism.

movement, were among the instigators of a strike of some 2,300 workers against the Kyodo Printing Company, which lasted for 58 days—from February to April.²¹ Perhaps the most bitterly fought strike involving Hyogikai was one against the Japan Musical Instrument Company at Hamamatsu, in which some 1,200 workers left their jobs for 105 days from April to August. During this strike, Mitamura and Nabeyama, utilizing the experience gained from the study of the May 30th movement at Shanghai, established a strike headquarters with departments for information, education, printing, and defense, and formed a militant force of 13 squads of strikers. When nationalist right-wing societies sent strikebreakers from Tokyo, violence became common. Finally, in August, the officials of the strike headquarters were arrested, and the workers agreed to arbitration. The communists were content with the outcome, in that they regarded the experience gained in the strike as practical training for revolution.²² Hyogikai was much more active in strikes than Sodomei. In 1926 alone, over 5,000 Hyogikai members were detained by the police and 196 imprisoned because of strikes.²³ The activities of its leaders were closely watched by the Japanese police, of course. A good example of this can be seen in a case involving a visit of four Soviet labor leaders in September 1925—a trip made possible by the resumption of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Soviet Union the previous spring. The Russians were escorted from their point of disembarkation to Tokyo by Noda, Kawada, and Mitamura. At Tokyo station, they were welcomed by some 2,000 workers, but the police were also on hand and arrested the escort and their interpreters. Thereafter, plain-clothesmen kept the Russians under constant surveillance, generally obstructed their movements, prevented them from maintaining contact with Hyogikai leaders, and at Osaka again arrested their Japanese guides. The Russians finally cut short their visit—an action hardly regretted by the authorities.²⁴

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

The communists were also active among youth organizations, especially the youth division of Hyogikai and the All-Japan Student Social Science Federation (Zen Nihon Gakusei Shakai Kagaku Rengokai), or Gakuren. These two organizations provided a foundation for the re-establishment of the Communist Youth League of Japan in the summer of 1925. Gakuren, formerly the National Federation of Students,

had been renamed and reorganized at its national convention at Kyoto in July 1924; it had discarded the character of a study association and had become increasingly involved in propaganda and agitation activities among Japanese workers. The communists also urged college students and other young people to join the Society for Political Studies in order to influence the proletarian party movement.

The Communist Youth League, under the leadership of Kitauro, merged in August 1925 with the Leveler Youth League, and began to plan the organization of a more broadly based group, the All-Japan Proletarian Youth League (*Zen Nihon Musan Seinen Domei*). A preparatory meeting for the new national body was held in September, and by November the group's organization was completed with the establishment of local branches. The first national convention was held in Tokyo on December 12; among the most important groups represented were the youth departments of Hyogikai and the Japan Peasant Union, the Leveler Youth League, and Gakuren. At the convention, leaders were elected and a platform approved. The platform included demands for the extension of suffrage to everyone over eighteen, abolition of "feudal" family paternalism, cancelation of school tuition, and creation of education facilities for factory workers. The new league was open to youths between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. Its leaders hoped to establish branches in schools and factories throughout the country.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Proletarian Youth League activity was its opposition to the government's extension of military training in schools. In April 1925, the government decreed that all students in middle, normal, and higher schools were to be given a military training course, and that if university students elected to take the course, their military service would be reduced from 12 to 10 months. A number of incidents helped to create a national opposition movement. At Otaru Commercial School in Hokkaido, for example, an army officer had the students prepare to break up a riot of radical left-wingers as a military training exercise.²⁵ Local opposition to this and other incidents quickly became national in scope.

The authorities reacted against the rise of the Proletarian Youth League by striking at Gakuren, the organization that provided the hard core of the league's leadership. Invoking the Peace Preservation Law for the first time since it had gone into effect in April, the police began a series of arrests at Kyoto University on December 1, 1925, and ultimately jailed 38 Gakuren members. Among those subsequently

sentenced (in May 1927) to jail sentences of from one to three years were Iwata Yoshimichi, Murao Satsuo, Noro Eitaro, and Akizasa Masanosuke, all of whom later were active in the Japanese Communist Party and its front organizations.²⁶

The police brought to light some unexpected and useful information. They arrested Maniwa in Kobe in December 1925 and found on him the texts of the Shanghai Theses and the Heller Theses. Released on bail, Maniwa reported the police discovery to Sano Manabu, who had returned to Japan from the Soviet Union in July 1925, and with Sano's permission, he broke bail and fled to Vladivostok. Sano, meanwhile, reported to the procurator-general for trial in connection with the June 1923 "roundup"; he ultimately received a ten-month sentence.

THE COMMUNIST GROUP

The rapid turn of events in the spring of 1925—especially the split in Sodomei and the passage of the universal manhood suffrage bill—forced the communist bureau to reassess its position and plan future strategy. (In addition, the Comintern was applying pressure.) Tokuda, Arahata, Kitaura, Sano Fumio, and Maniwa met in August and decided to replace the bureau with a larger organization until a party could be formed as a branch of the Comintern. The new organization came to be called the "communist group." Central executive committee assignments were made as follows: Tokuda, chairman of the "group" and chief of the organization department; Watanabe, chief of the labor union department; Sano Fumio, managing editor of a new organ, *The Proletarian News* (*Musansha Shinbun*); Kitaura, chief of the youth department; and Arahata, chief representative in the Kansai region.²⁷ Tokuda seems to have been given his elevated position because he had access to Comintern funds through his close relationship with Comintern representatives, particularly Jacob Janson, the trade representative at the Soviet Embassy in Tokyo.²⁸

New "organizational theses" were adopted in accordance with recommendations made by the Fifth Congress of the Comintern held in 1924. The communist group was to be based on the principle of democratic centralism, with factory cells as the foundation and with fractions within various mass organizations. (A fraction was a small group of communists under party discipline that was organized especially to influence policy in labor and other mass organizations.) There was a

dispute, however, over membership. Tokuda held that the group should follow the line of the Shanghai Theses and relax its requirements in order to increase its size, but Arahata, who insisted that the group should be "100 per cent" communist, had his way. Arahata based his position on the need to "liquidate sectarian tendencies," which he accused Tokuda of fostering.²⁹ Group membership tended therefore to remain small. Moreover, Yamakawa's influence was still great, and his continued advocacy of action through legal mass organizations also slowed the group's growth. According to a list discovered in 1928, membership in the communist group grew from seven in the spring of 1925 to 30 by the end of that year and 40 in February 1926.³⁰

The communist group also adopted new "political theses." These began with a summary of the rapid development of the movement to establish a proletarian political party—a movement that faced two dangers: the attempt of the ruling classes to separate the masses from such a party, and the efforts of the reformists to make it into a social democratic party. The communists were called upon to drive the social democrats out of the proletarian party movement and to form fractions to seize control of it.* They were then to lead the proletarian party to the establishment of a "government of workers and peasants"—an important step toward the ultimate goal of socialism. As Ichikawa Shoichi later wrote: "The program made it clear that the proletarian party could never be a substitute for the Communist Party." (He was careful to add that "it had no connection with the opportunistic organizational theory of Yamakawa Hitoshi.")³¹ The communist group also adopted the following central slogans: "Defeat the War of Imperialism," "Liberate Korea and Other Colonies," "Establish the Eight-Hour Working-Day System," "Suffrage for Everyone over Eighteen Years of Age," and "Establish a Government of Workers and Peasants."³²

The new communist organ, *The Proletarian News*, made its appearance on September 20 as a semimonthly publication. Its editorial pol-

* The February 26, 1925, issue of *International Press Correspondence* noted: "There is a danger that the reformists will sidetrack the movement, and signs of their endeavors in this direction are already observable. A communist party in Japan is more necessary now than ever before, for only this can give direction to the growing discontent in the country, and gather together the increasing forces of the working class in the struggle against the enemy" (p. 239). And in the May 21, 1925, issue: "It is, of course, the task of the communists to enter the [proletarian] party for the purpose of combating the petty bourgeois ideology of intellectuals of the type of [Kagawa] and others, who wish to convert this party into a parliamentary party of democracy" (p. 570).

icy was determined by Tokuda and Sano Fumio, and emphasized the establishment of a single proletarian party under communist leadership. Under the editorship of Sekine Etsuro, it became a weekly in January 1926; later, under Sano Manabu's direction, it was published six times a month and, for a time, daily. As might have been expected, various issues (for example, two of the first five) were confiscated by the police. However, despite constant attempts at suppression, 239 issues of the *News* were printed before it ceased publication on August 20, 1929.

THE ORGANIZATION OF A PROLETARIAN PARTY

The major focus of communist activity during the summer and fall of 1925 was the movement to organize a proletarian political party. The drive toward organization was already well under way, with leadership in the hands of the Japan Peasant Union, which had issued an invitation in June to all interested groups having a membership of 1,000 or more to help form a preparatory council. Representatives from 16 left-wing organizations met at Osaka in August and agreed in principle to establish a single party based upon all proletarian groups with 100 or more members.³³ However, when they began formulating a platform, it soon became clear that there was little likelihood that major groups like Sodomei and Hyogikai would find any basis for cooperation. The struggle between the social democrats and the communists continued to keep the left wing divided.

The communists were particularly active in the efforts of the Society for Political Studies to prepare a draft platform for a political party. The society's research committee considered three drafts—two prepared by right-wing moderates and a third by Sano Fumio. Sano's draft platform was ultimately adopted, and was submitted for discussion to the first meeting of the platform and rules research committee of the Proletarian Party Preparatory Council, which was held in Osaka in September.³⁴ Sano laid down the Comintern line. He linked Japanese capitalism with world capitalism "as one component of an integrated world system." It already displayed "all the characteristics of full-fledged imperialism," he stated, i.e., "rapid accumulation and monopolistic tendencies, violent reactionary policies of financial oligarchy, and policies of exploitation and militaristic aggression against colonial peoples." It had developed without passing through the stage of democracy, and therefore the proletariat could not expect much

improvement, politically or economically, through reformism.³⁵ According to Sano, the only way the proletarian masses could achieve their aims was through revolutionary struggle. Though he emphasized the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie, he followed the Comintern line by acknowledging the survival of feudal forces. He called for Japan's workers and peasants to unite "as the exploited and the oppressed, and win their common class goals." In brief, Sano wanted a proletarian party, representing the workers and peasants, to be based on the principle of class struggle, not reformism.

Communists also dominated the drafting of a platform submitted by Hyogikai at the September meeting of the preparatory council. In contrast to the general statements of Sano's draft platform, the planks in the Hyogikai platform were quite specific. They were divided into two categories—political demands and economic demands. The political demands included: abolition of the elder statesmen (the powerful group of advisers around the emperor), the House of Peers, the Privy Council, the general staffs of the army and navy, and the peerage system; the right to vote and to seek elective office for everyone over eighteen; abolition of legislation restricting speech, assembly, press and association, including the Peace Preservation Law, the Public Peace Police Law, and "all other laws of violent repression"; freedom to organize labor unions and peasant unions, to strike and demonstrate, and to bargain collectively; abolition of "slave treatment" of soldiers in barracks; the right of soldiers to receive adequate pay and to participate in the formulation of regulations governing barracks life; the assurance of government assistance to families in economic difficulties caused by injury in war or because of conscription; institution of a one-year conscription system; abolition of military courts and the military police; an end to "militarization of the masses"; and immediate government indemnification for the victims of miscarriages of justice caused by official actions. The economic demands were: the right of labor to supervise industries; the "immediate" granting to labor of supervision over government and public enterprises; the right of peasants to control the land, and to farm it collectively; the right of cultivators to control land-improvement projects, and the appropriation of government funds for such projects; the control by cultivators of the acquisition and distribution of fertilizers and farm implements; and a government guarantee of security for life for tenant farmers who were victims of agrarian depression.³⁶

These two draft platforms indicate in outline the role that the

communists expected the legal proletarian party to play. (In general, they seem to have been based on the 1922 draft platform of the Japanese Communist Party.) The political and economic planks suggest that the communists wanted the proletarian party to work for democratization of the political system and the improvement of economic conditions for the masses, but there can be no doubt of the communists' intentions and ultimate objectives. They quite clearly wanted a legal proletarian party to fight for the abolition of the imperial system, but they were not ready to have it made an open issue. Nor did they want the party to talk frankly of a bourgeois-democratic revolution as a necessary stage in the revolutionary process. They regarded the achievement of democracy as a task for the workers and peasants, particularly since they believed that Japanese capitalism was already imperialistic and could not pass through a period of democracy. Their emphasis on these points and on others—especially capitalism as a worldwide system and the class struggle—was calculated to serve as an attack upon the tenets of social democracy as well as those of capitalism.

At the September meeting of the preparatory council, the Sodomei representatives made clear their objections to both draft platforms. They branded many of the planks too radical, e.g., abolition of the House of Peers and the Privy Council. More important, however, they charged that Hyogikai was seeking to control the proletarian party and force it to follow the communist line. They charged, moreover, that the Society for Political Studies was nothing more than a mouthpiece for Hyogikai. There was a good deal of justification for this charge, since Hyogikai had encouraged its members to join the Society for Political Studies. Sodomei opposed its admission, as well as that of the Proletarian Youth League, into the party. In any case, it was difficult for Sodomei to accept the idea of cooperation since it was being vilified by Hyogikai throughout the country.

Sodomei clarified its own policies during a convention held in October 1925. The convention slogan—"Toward Realism"—was a significant one. The moderate leadership meant by this slogan that the belief that a vanguard filled with revolutionary fervor could bring the working class to power without a practical program attuned to the needs and interests of the masses had to be abandoned. Sodomei decided to adopt such a program and to base it on the principles of social democracy rather than on those of revolutionary Marxism. Their basic assumptions were that social democracy constituted a po-

litical and ethical approach to progress superior to revolutionary Marxism, that it represented true democracy, and that it would be accepted by the masses. Anxious to clarify the autonomous role of unions in the left-wing movement, Sodomei defined a labor union as a self-governing organization of workers—one that should be free of outside political leadership, though it could appropriately participate in politics as long as there was no fusion of union and political party or subordination of the one to the other. Sodomei criticized Hyogikai because it was neither led by workers nor independent; instead, claimed Sodomei, it took its orders from Moscow via the Profintern and the Japanese communists.³⁷

THE FAILURE OF THE UNIFIED PARTY MOVEMENT

Quite clearly, it was impossible for Hyogikai and Sodomei to form a united front for political purposes. Despite concession after concession made by Hyogikai in order to achieve the greatest unity possible, Sodomei finally announced its intention to withdraw from the preparatory council on November 29. Fearing that the proposed new party would be taken over by the extreme left, Sodomei declared that it would not join any party that included Hyogikai, the Society for Political Studies, or the Proletarian Youth League. Hyogikai withdrew the following day to avoid the accusation that its inclusion in the party was the cause of disruption, and the Society for Political Studies promised to disband as soon as the party was established.*

A proletarian party—the Farmer-Labor Party (Nomin Rodoto)—was established on December 1, 1925, but like the Socialist Party of 1901, it was to have no history. Its officers were summoned to the Metropolitan Police Board immediately after the inaugural meeting and were ordered to dissolve the party. The police claimed that the party had a secret communist platform in addition to its official one. Even if the government had permitted the party to exist, it would not

* By this time the Society for Political Studies was hopelessly split and could play no effective role. One group of moderates had resigned in October in protest against the draft platform submitted to the preparatory council. In January 1926, these moderates joined remnants of the Japan Fabian Society, which had disbanded, to form the Independent Labor Association (Dokuritsu Rodo Kyokai) to foster the development of a proletarian party independent of communist influence. Its leaders included Abe, Yoshino, and Kagawa. Even with this split, there was little harmony within the society, and in April more members, including Oyama Ikuo and Suzuki Mosaburo, quit. In May, Sano Fumio and Shiga reorganized the society into the communist-dominated Mass Education League (Taishu Kyoiku Domei).

have been the unified party for which so many had hoped. Rather, it would have been essentially a party of moderates representing some 33 labor and peasant organizations. The top officials named at the inaugural meeting came, for the most part, from the Japan Peasant Union. Sugiyama was elected chairman, and Asanuma Inejiro, a former member of the People's League at Waseda University, secretary-general. The party's platform emphasized parliamentary action to achieve such objectives as social insurance, protection of tenant rights, reduction of armaments, and recognition of labor unions.

The action of the government did not forestall other attempts at political organization, however. On March 5, 1926, the Japan Peasant Union under the leadership of Sugiyama joined several moderate unions, including Sodomei, the "centrist" Japan Labor Union Federation (Nihon Rodo Kumiai Sorengo), which had been founded by a small group of unions that had split off from Sodomei in October 1925, and conservative unions like the Seamen's Union (Kaiin Kumiai) and the Federation of Government Enterprise Workers (Kangyo Rodo Sodomei), to form the Labor-Farmer Party (Rodo Nominto). With Sugiyama as chairman and Abe, Kagawa, Nishio, and Aso as central committee members, the new party adopted a moderate social democratic platform that, much like the platform of the Farmer-Labor Party, urged social reform through legal action. It pledged "the realization of the political, economic, and social emancipation of the proletarian class in accordance with national conditions," as well as "the reform, through legal means, of the system connected with inequitable land and production distribution," and "the overthrow of the established parties, which represent only the interests of the privileged classes, and the fundamental reform of the Diet."³⁸

The platform included the following planks: universal suffrage for all persons over twenty years of age; repeal of all laws and regulations restricting the working-class movement; the right of labor to organize, strike, and bargain collectively; the protection and expansion of the legal rights of tenant farmers; progressive income and property taxes; abolition of taxes on daily necessities; minimum wages, social insurance, and an eight-hour day; women's rights; free education; democratic reorganization of the army and navy; and reduction of armaments.³⁹ This time the government did not immediately move to ban the party. Instead the authorities adopted a wait-and-see attitude. However, they did not relax their vigilance with regard to possible communist influence.

In order to exclude the communists and other extreme leftists, the organizers of the Labor-Farmer Party adopted a rule that allowed only members of the constituent organizations to join the party. Nevertheless, there was still much support in the party for the concept of a single, united proletarian party, and a bitter conflict was waged within the central executive committee over the issue of whether or not to admit members of Hyogikai, the Society for Political Studies, and the Proletarian Youth League. Some of the peasant youth groups, especially those under the leadership of Oyama Ikuo, took a strong affirmative position. The door was opened in mid-April at the second session of the party's central executive committee. By a vote of nine to eight, the committee approved a new membership policy under which members of excluded organizations could, for all practical purposes, join the party. The new policy simply stated that "any qualified individual could join, with candidates to be approved by the branches to which they applied."

The new rule, which was regarded by its supporters as a compromise, had the effect of destroying the original coalition and laying the foundation for dominance of the party by the communists. The opponents of the new policy did not accept it. Protests came from Hirano Rikizo, Okabe Kansuke, and others who had resigned from the Japan Peasant Union and formed the All-Japan League of Peasant Unions (Zen Nihon Nomin Kumiai Domei), with a claimed membership of 20,000. (This action was taken only a week prior to the Labor-Farmer Party's central executive committee meeting.) Attacking the "extremism" of the youthful elements of the Japan Peasant Union, they immediately withdrew from the Labor-Farmer Party. In October, they formed the ineffectual Japan Farmer Party (Nihon Nominto). Sodomai also objected to the new membership policy, and at the third meeting of the central executive committee on July 26, threatened to resign if the party included branches formed with the assistance of Hyogikai and other extremist organizations. The central executive committee thereupon reversed the April decision.⁴⁰ Hyogikai on its part continued to demand a "united front," and was active in the formation of party branches. The Japan Peasant Union sided with Hyogikai, admitting Hyogikai-affiliated individuals into party branches under its own influence.

The drive to create a unified proletarian party finally collapsed altogether. Sodomai and the other labor unions withdrew from the Labor-Farmer Party on October 24, at the fourth meeting of the cen-

tral executive committee, declaring they would not cooperate with communist forces, economically or politically. Thereafter, under the leadership of Oyama Ikuo, Hososako Kanemitsu, and Mizutani Chozaburo, the Labor-Farmer Party lifted all restrictions on membership. As was to be expected, it was joined by all the extreme leftist organizations and was later often manipulated effectively by the communists.

The political movement of the proletariat was soon hopelessly divided. Sodomei and other labor unions joined with moderate intellectual groups like the Independent Labor Association to form the Social Democratic Party (Shakai Minshuto) on December 5, 1926. They elected Abe chairman, and Suzuki Bunji, Nishio, Akamatsu, Shimana-ka, and Kagawa central committee members. The new party derived most of its support from Sodomei and tended, therefore, to give political expression to Sodomei aims. Its platform called for a program of "social reform through rational means," which was interpreted by the communists to mean "compromise with capitalism." The party's specific platform planks were not much different from those of the Labor-Farmer Party.⁴¹ The differences lay in what had to be left unsaid.

The Social Democratic Party split only four days after it was formed, when a group of "left-wing socialists," including Aso, Kono Mitsu, and Kato Kanju, joined forces with Asanuma and others of the Japan Peasant Union to establish the Japan Labor-Farmer Party (Nihon Ronoto). The break was the result of both personality clashes and ideological differences. Aso and a small number of university graduates in the labor union movement had found it increasingly difficult to work with practical-minded labor leaders like Nishio and Matsuoka. Largely products of the New Men Society and the Builders' League, these intellectuals were more inclined to revolutionary Marxist viewpoints than were the "worker-administrative" types.⁴² They held that leadership of the proletarian movement should stand somewhere between the "far left" of the communists and the Labor-Farmer Party on one side, and the "right wing" of Sodomei and the Social Democratic Party on the other. They believed that they could provide the kind of leadership that could lay the basis for the establishment of a united front. The central committee of Sodomei was understandably indignant at their exodus from the Social Democratic Party, and demanded that the new party's founders resign from Sodomei. When they refused to do so, the central committee expelled them. Their unions followed them out of Sodomei and formed the Japan Labor Un-

ion League (Nihon Rodo Kumiai Domei) with some 5,000 to 6,000 members.

The Japan Labor-Farmer Party had the support of the Japan Labor Union Federation and of the Sugiyama-Asanuma faction of the Japan Peasant Union, which after expulsion from that body in February 1927, formed a third peasant organization on March 1—the All-Japan Peasant Union (Zen Nihon Nomin Kumiai).^{*} Of the three major proletarian parties, the Japan Labor-Farmer Party was the “centrist” party, the Social Democratic Party was on the “right,” and the Labor-Farmer Party on the “left.” The leaders of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party considered themselves essentially Marxist revolutionaries, but they insisted that they were independent of Comintern influence. Though their strategy to achieve rule by the proletariat was based upon the concept of class struggle, they were dedicated to the legal political movement and to a political and economic program acceptable to the masses. They condemned the left as being “inflicted with an infantile disorder” and the right as being “senile and sick.” What they wanted was to provide a new basis for a united front including all labor and peasant organizations. However, that goal was an impossible one, and in trying to formulate strategy to achieve it, the party tended to be hazy on issues and even seemed hypocritical. Sometimes it was difficult to distinguish it from the other two parties. The Social Democrats regarded the “centrists” as unwitting tools of the communists. The communists, though they believed that a union of the left and the center would be desirable, were critical of the “petty bourgeois mentality” of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party. Later the Japan Labor-Farmer Party split up and its member groups found havens on the right or left of the proletarian movement or among groups in the budding national socialist movement. The hard core of its leadership developed close ties with certain Japanese militarists who were disappointed with capitalism and sought to reform society.⁴³

The communist-dominated Labor-Farmer Party held its first convention on December 12, 1926, in order to rebuild its organization. Oyama Ikuo held the position of chairman, and Hososako, that of sec-

^{*} Totten points out that “following these splits in the Japan Peasant Union there remained no agrarian support for the Social Democratic Party, whose only alternative was to develop its own peasant organization.” He adds, “Such an organization was officially launched on March 7, 1927, under the deceptively grand title of the General Federation of Japanese Peasant Unions (Nihon Nomin Kumiai Sodomei). Led by the leaders of Sodomei who were only known in the cities, it had few contacts in the countryside. It succeeded in recruiting no more than three or four hundred peasants, scattered about in the Kanto area” (Totten, p. 340).

retary-general. There was still a good deal of talk of the need for a single proletarian party during the convention; at the same time, there was an increasing realization that there was little likelihood of achieving that end. The leaders of the Labor-Farmer Party brushed off the Social Democratic Party as a "petty bourgeois party outside the proletariat," but they pursued the possibility of merging with the Japan Labor-Farmer Party, which appeared sympathetic to the principle of unification. This did not prove fruitful, however, because of the uncompromising stand taken by the Japan Labor-Farmer Party, which boldly declared: "Rejecting the left of the Labor-Farmer Party and the right of the Social Democratic Party, we have established the correct line of the proletarian movement." The Labor-Farmer Party began therefore to move toward an acceptance of the concept of a smaller vanguard party instead of a mass one. This was hardly in keeping with the realities of the situation, since the party had the mass support of the Japan Peasant Union; it was, rather, a reflection of the party's almost exclusive labor orientation and the increasing influence on it of the elitist theory that was coming to dominate the Japanese communist movement.

The events of 1925 and 1926 demonstrated that the proletarian political and labor movements were hopelessly divided. The labor union movement remained split, and the proletarian political movement gave rise to political parties that covered the spectrum from the far left of communism to the far right of social democracy. In this situation, it was only natural that Japan's communists should tend to regard themselves as a revolutionary elite. They scorned reformism and felt that their views—and theirs alone—represented the antithesis of the views held by the Japanese power structure. This meant that except for their efforts to influence the Labor-Farmer Party, they were outside the mainstream of the proletarian political movement. The ideological confusion created by the proliferation of parties forced the communists to face up to the need to develop a party organization and to clarify their strategy and tactics. This, in turn, led to their acceptance of the elitist revolutionary theory of young Fukumoto Kazuo.

Reestablishment of the Party, 1926-1927

In 1926 the Comintern intensified its campaign to get the Japanese communists to reestablish a secret party. It asked them to send a representative to discuss the matter at the Sixth Plenum of the Executive Committee to be held at Moscow from February 17 to March 15, 1926. The Japanese communists selected Tokuda as the representative and approved a report to the Comintern that he and Sano Manabu drafted. At Moscow, Tokuda served on a special committee on Japan that included E. H. Brown of Great Britain (chairman), M. N. Roy of India, Voitinsky, Heller, and Katayama. The main task of the committee was to draft theses for the new Japanese Communist Party. Voitinsky was to prepare a draft for approval by a subcommittee composed of Tokuda, Katayama, and Roy. The committee did not complete its work during the plenum; however, draft theses—the so-called Moscow Theses—were adopted with the proviso that they would be submitted in final form for approval at the next plenum.¹

The Moscow Theses began with a brief statement acknowledging that Japanese capitalism was continuing to expand and that “the political power of the landlord-capitalist bloc, in which the landlords held hegemony, is now completely under the hegemony of the bourgeoisie.”* According to the theses, the bourgeoisie and the landlords recovered from the recession following World War I and from the great earthquake of 1923 “through intense exploitation of the workers and peasants and through dispossession of the semifeudal business organizations of traditional domestic industries and small traders.” The workers’ and peasants’ movements were therefore “rapidly turning to the left,” and the petty bourgeoisie had become “considerably more proletarian.” The theses declared that in order to suppress the opposition of the workers and peasants, the Japanese bourgeoisie and landlords were mobilizing their semifeudal political machinery and, at the same time, were bribing Christian right-wing leaders like Suzuki

* The full text of this document appears as Appendix C, pp. 293–94.

Bunji and Kagawa Toyohiko "in order to make them their agents in the workers' and peasants' movements."

What implications did this have for overall communist strategy and tactics? At first glance, the Comintern answer appeared to be the same as before. The bourgeois-democratic revolution carried out by the workers in alliance with the peasants and petty bourgeoisie was still to be the first stage in the revolutionary process. However, there was one important change in the view of that process. Now, the theses declared, there was a much greater possibility that the bourgeois-democratic revolution would be rapidly transformed into a proletarian one.

The revolutionary leadership was to be provided by the Japanese Communist Party, of course. The theses called for the reestablishment of the party and defined its role in general terms:

A labor-farmer party movement . . . is necessary in order to unite all forces opposed to the bloc of bourgeoisie and landlords. Although the policy of creating a united party, in defiance of the right-wing policy of disunion, is correct, the Communist Party should not lose its independence, but should form strong fractions within the Labor-Farmer Party to gain hegemony over it. . . . The Japanese communists must participate wholeheartedly in the workers' day-to-day struggles and devote their energies to strengthening and expanding left-wing labor unions as well as the labor union unification movement.

The committee also provided Tokuda with specific instructions on how to transform the "communist group" into a party. The communists were told to overcome the tendencies toward "petty bourgeois indecision" and the "dissolutionism and legalism" of the old bolsheviks, to broaden the base of party support by discontinuing the "100 per cent" principle for membership and by taking more workers into the party, to establish cells in factories and to form more fractions in mass organizations, and to issue more secret publications, replacing abstract discussions with consideration of "immediate, concrete problems." Finally, they were instructed to hold a party congress and report to the next Comintern executive committee plenum.

Tokuda returned to Japan in May, and the next month, Japanese communist leaders met in Gunma Prefecture and approved the Moscow Theses. They also worked out plans to increase membership to 300 and to hold a party convention in February 1927, when most of the communists arrested in June 1923 would be out of prison. (Tokuda began serving his sentence shortly after his return; Watanabe, who served his term from April to August, assumed Tokuda's responsibili-

ties and established close contact with Janson at the Soviet Embassy.)² In September the communists decided to move faster with their plans—to hold the organizational congress in November 1926 instead of in February. They set up a preparatory committee whose members had the following responsibilities: Fukumoto Kazuo, the preparation of a party manifesto and political theses; Sano Fumio, party rules and theses on the peasant movement; Watanabe, theses on the labor movement; and Kitaura, a report on the political and economic situation in Japan.³ They also decided to establish Kanto and Kansai district committees. The reason for the shift in plans probably lay in the ambition of Sano Fumio, Fukumoto, and their followers to gain control of the new party. They felt that they had to act before the members of the first Communist Party were released from jail.⁴

FUKUMOTO

Fukumoto had emerged in 1925 and 1926 as one of the most influential writers in the left-wing movement. He was a prolific writer with articles in almost every issue of *Marxism*, and had established a reputation as an outstanding theorist through his interpretation of the thought of Marx and Lenin and his criticism of Japanese Marxist scholars and polemicists, particularly Professor Kawakami of Kyoto University and Yamakawa. His knowledge of Marxist economics, of the materialistic dialectic and view of history, and of Leninism gave him a prominent position in left-wing intellectual circles.* Although his presentation was often awkward, the very complexity of his style held a perverse attraction for many young intellectuals.

Whereas Yamakawa's approach was basically empirical, Fukumoto had a tendency to start from ideas and formulas. He emphasized theory

* How widely Fukumoto was read is reflected in a recent work by Terao Toshi, who was then studying Marxism in a study group at Japan Women's College and who later joined the Labor-Farmer Party and the Communist Party. She states: "The guiding theory of the proletarian movement at that time had shifted from Yamakawaism to Fukumotoism; and Fukumoto's book *The Structure of Society and the Process of Change* was used as our text. This book, which was regarded as the bible of Marxism, sold very well. And since one who had not read this book could not even pretend to talk about Marxism, we desperately studied his peculiarly difficult writing. Other books by Fukumoto that were used for study included *The Change of Direction*, *Theoretical Struggle*, and *The Methodology of Criticism in Economics*. . . . The Women's College group told us that Fukumoto was the Marx of Japan. He was actually worshipped like a god by the progressive intellectuals" (Terao, pp. 57–58). The twice-married and divorced Fukumoto was particularly attractive to college girls. At the time of his arrest in June 1928, he was living with Nakamura Tsuneko, a former student at Japan Women's College.

over practical means for the solution of political and organizational problems, and among his followers, a knowledge of theory counted for more than experience. The ideologically inclined young students and university graduates who were entering the left-wing movement found a convenient guide and weapon in Fukumotoism, and Yamakawa and his followers found it increasingly difficult to overcome their arguments.

Born in 1894 in Tottori Prefecture, the second son of a moderately prosperous landlord, Fukumoto had received the best education that Japan could offer. After attending local schools, he studied at the First Higher School of Tokyo and at the law department of Tokyo Imperial University. Upon graduation from the university in 1920, he entered government service as a junior official in Shimane Prefecture. He became a lecturer in law and economics at Matsue Higher School a year later. In 1922, the Ministry of Education sent him to Europe to study law. In Europe, he became engrossed in Marxism, reading widely in Marx, Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, and others; he also joined the German Communist Party. Ordered home by the Japanese government in 1924, he returned to his post at Matsue, but was transferred to Yamaguchi Higher School in January 1925.

Fukumoto began publishing his views shortly after his return to Japan. He gave up his post at the Yamaguchi Higher School in March 1926 and went to Tokyo. Shortly thereafter, he joined the small communist group, and worked as an assistant editor of *Marxism*.⁵ From June to December, 1926, he published his own small journal—*Under the Flag of Marxism* (*Marukushizumu no Hata no Moto ni*); at the same time, he continued to be the chief contributor to *Marxism*, often writing under the pen name Hojo Kazuo.

The program that Fukumoto formulated for the Japanese proletariat and its “true vanguard,” the Communist Party, was based upon several assumptions about the nature of Japanese society. Like most of his leftist contemporaries, he believed that Japanese capitalism had reached the stage of imperialism, even though the bourgeoisie had not yet swept away “absolutist and autocratic forces.” But he differed from the other leftists on a crucial point: he firmly believed that Japanese capitalism was already in a period of rapid decline, reflecting the general decline of world capitalism. He concluded therefore that the Japanese proletariat, which grew with the development of capitalism, had an opportunity to make a “great leap forward to the stage of political struggle”—a leap that had to be based on the attainment by the

proletariat of "genuine class consciousness."⁶ It was his belief that the working masses were ready for the development of such class consciousness.⁷

According to Fukumoto, the political struggle would focus at the outset on "fighting for bourgeois democracy." He specified how that fight should be conducted:

First, we must fight politically. Our movement must become total and united. Second, the present struggle must be carried on as part of a historical process leading to the complete victory of the proletariat. Third, to achieve the immediate goals of the struggle, a mass united front, led by the proletariat, must be developed among the proletariat, peasantry, and petty bourgeoisie. This united front, with particular emphasis on cooperation between the proletariat and peasantry, is eventually to prepare for a government of workers and peasants in the struggle for the complete victory of the proletariat. . . . But we must not let the left-wing spirit [Marxism] become dissolved among the masses because of the need to cooperate in a front. We must not hesitate to stage a bold political struggle against all types of opportunism—so-called "realism," petty bourgeois ideologies, unionist ideologies, parliamentarianism, etc.—and thereby expose their substance to the masses.⁸

The key issue of the political struggle, as Fukumoto saw it, was the problem of establishing a correct, unified theoretical basis for the proletarian movement. To him this meant dealing with the question of how "to give life to, deepen, and spread Marxism and Marxist influence." His answer to that question came to be called Fukomotoism. First, he called for the separation of genuine Marxists from false Marxists and reformists as a prerequisite to the achievement of unity. He quoted Lenin in support of this principle: "Before people unite themselves, they must separate themselves cleanly." Second, he urged the true Marxists to make theoretical struggles their major activity: "Revolutionary Marxism must fight persistently against every form of bourgeois thought influencing the proletariat."⁹ It was his judgment that the development of the theoretical struggle had already brought reformist unionism "to a climax (or the beginning of its collapse)" and had led the left wing "to a mature consciousness of political action worthy of the whole proletariat."¹⁰ To Fukumoto, the Communist Party was the only instrument that "could use, direct, promote, or transform all political opposition, thereby making the proletarian movement a genuine class movement."¹¹ He advocated a "new method of struggle"—the establishment of a national daily newspaper to express the party line.¹²

Fukumoto devoted much time and energy attempting to discredit the views of Yamakawa, which from the standpoint of strategy and organization were so different from his own. His main charge was that Yamakawa, like Sakai and so many others, did not understand the basic need to concentrate upon “unity through separation.” He branded Yamakawa’s concept of “change of direction” an “eclectic theory”—a compromise between socialism and unionism. Fukumoto charged that Yamakawism represented a reversion to reformism and parliamentarianism, and that Yamakawa was a victim of the very danger against which he had continually warned.¹³ What Fukumoto criticized most was Yamakawa’s failure to recognize that only a communist party could play the important roles of separating and uniting the Marxists and of carrying on theoretical struggles. He found it lamentable that “among Marxists today, there are those who believe, consciously or unconsciously, in a spontaneous growth of the left-wing spirit.”¹⁴ Fukumoto conceded that Yamakawa understood the necessity of shifting from a labor union struggle to a socialist political struggle, but he claimed that Yamakawa did not realize what this involved.* “He is unable to realize how class consciousness nurtured by economic struggles can be developed into proletarian political consciousness or socialist political consciousness, and what intermediate steps are needed in the process of this development.” Yamakawa’s change of direction theory had reached a limit and could go no further, Fukumoto asserted.¹⁵

Fukumoto attacked Yamakawa’s position on related tactics as well. A key issue concerned the efforts to establish a noncommunist left-wing party by a small group, some of whose members had broken with the Society for Political Studies in the spring of 1926 and had established the journal *The Masses* (Taishu). (Among the members were Suzuki Mosaburo, Kuroda, Oyama Ikuo, and Urata). Yamakawa continued to uphold the idea of the need for a single legal proletarian party that would incorporate such moderate elements. What he wanted was a united front of all left-wing proletarian elements—in his words, a “left-wing advance” against the “increasing influence of the right wing” (the Social Democrats).¹⁶ (He had, for all practical pur-

* In the April 1926 issue of *Marxism*, Yamakawa wrote: “It is needless to say that one of the major tasks of the Labor-Farmer Party is to win political freedom and democracy. But our proletarian party must not only take over the fight for democracy that the bourgeoisie discarded along the way, but also link it to the struggle of the proletariat under imperialist capitalism. This is the particular task of the Labor-Farmer Party” (Yamakawa, “Rodo Nominto no Ninmu,” p. 9).

poses, written off the possibility of securing the cooperation of right-wing proletarian elements. For example, he appealed to left-wing elements in the September 1926 issue of *Marxism* not to make concessions in order to form the Labor-Farmer Party.)¹⁷

To Fukumoto, the struggle was not with the right wing of the proletarian movement, or the "unionists," but with the noncommunist left-wing elements of the movement. He saw no danger of a deliberately formed right wing. "Our view of the right-left struggle at the present stage is that the right wing can no longer exist and develop as the right wing of the proletariat." However, he feared that a moderate left wing might lead to a genuine right wing.¹⁸ He attacked the group around *The Masses* for their contention that the extreme leftists, or communists, were in decline,¹⁹ and criticized Yamakawa's appeal for a "left-wing advance."²⁰

Fukumoto's ideas were attractive to those communists who were moving in the direction of reestablishing a communist party. Unlike Yamakawa, whose empirical approach emphasized the spontaneous growth of a revolutionary vanguard, and who pressed for an all-inclusive legal proletarian party based upon mass support, Fukumoto urged that a communist party be formed. Fukumoto accepted the need for a legal proletarian party, but his major concern was that a vanguard be prepared to capture the leadership of the legal party at the decisive time. His main impact on the communists was to improve their understanding of the importance of a theory of revolution, the organization of a revolutionary party, and a unifying principle for such a party. Thus, he contributed greatly to the reestablishment of the party and paved the way for its ready acceptance of the strategy and tactics prepared by the Comintern. The obvious danger in Fukumoto's strategy was the likelihood of the communists becoming isolated from other left-wing groups as well as from the masses. His emphasis upon theoretical struggles to achieve Marxist consciousness involved the communists in seemingly endless and meaningless discussion. The communists tended to rationalize any type of intra-group feuding in the name of consciousness and theoretical struggles to achieve separation and unity.

REESTABLISHMENT OF THE PARTY

The Japanese Communist Party was formally reestablished in December 1926, a month later than originally planned. On December 3,

Fukumoto, Watanabe Masanosuke, Sano Fumio, Mitamura, Nakao, and Matsuo Naoyoshi held a preliminary planning conference at Anahara spa in Fukushima Prefecture; on the following day, they were joined by “other communists at nearby Goshiki spa.* This so-called Third Congress formally organized the Japanese Communist Party as a branch of the Comintern. It also elected a new central committee: Sano Fumio, chairman and chief of the peasants’ department; Fukumoto, chief of the political department; Watanabe, chief of the organizational and labor departments; Sano Manabu (who was to be released from jail in January), editor of *The Proletarian News*; and Tokuda (also to be released shortly), Comintern representative in Japan. Ichikawa was also on the committee, as was Nabeyama, who had left for Moscow in October to attend the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern to be held in November and December. Nakao, Mitamura, Sugiura, and Kawai Etsuzo were elected candidate members.²¹ The election of these men meant that the supporters of Fukumoto’s theories were in control.²² They had additional strength in the party because members were being recruited for the most part from among young intellectuals and university graduates who were attracted by the concept of theoretical struggle.

Fukumoto set the tone of the discussion at Goshiki on strategy and tactics in a prepared statement he read.²³ In it he asserted that the Constitution of 1889, not the Meiji Restoration, constituted a bourgeois-democratic revolution, although it was not a complete one because the reactionary bourgeoisie compromised and united with the old autocratic system.

The revolution of the restoration . . . paved the way for the development of capitalism. This revolution overthrew Japanese feudalism, but since it brought about the rule of autocracy, it was not a bourgeois revolution. The bourgeoisie, which was still weak and remained under the rule of despotic forces, gradually increased its power, resisted those forces, and fought secretly and openly for bourgeois democracy until it finally won a constitution in 1889. This was a bourgeois revolution that was artfully concealed

* The communists gathered in small groups at the Ueno and Omiya stations, assumed disguises as employees of a Tokyo storage battery company, and proceeded to the inn at Goshiki, where their meeting had the appearance of a company outing. Katayama Mineto, Kadoya Hiroshi, Mizuno Shigeo, Kusakabe Goichiro, Toyota Sunao, all of the Kanto region; Kokuryo Goichiro and Kiire Torataro, both of the Kansai area; Fujii Tetsuo of Kyushu; and Fujiwara Hisashi (Saito Hisao), Nakano Hisao, and Kikuta Zengoro were the other members in attendance (Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 168–69). Fukumoto’s account lists Karasawa Seihachi, Nagae Jinsei, Kawai, Sugiura, and Amemiya Tokusaburo, instead of Kiire, Toyota, and Kikuta (Fukumoto, *Kakumei Undo Razo*, pp. 64–66).

from the masses. The significant revolutionary nature of this event should not be overlooked because of the form of its achievement or because of the inconclusiveness of its content.

According to Fukumoto, because the bourgeoisie had compromised with the autocracy, it had been forced to fight unceasingly to strengthen its position and establish its hegemony. However, as Japanese capitalism continued to develop, the bourgeoisie turned reactionary.

The bourgeoisie, which increased its power as capitalism developed, continued to resist the institutional remnants of autocracy. This opposition ended, for all practical purposes, with the establishment of the first party cabinet. Before the rise of the working class . . . following the World War, the bourgeoisie turned reactionary, compromised and combined with the autocratic forces, and has today developed in itself the germ of fascist dictatorship.

Therefore, said Fukumoto, the Japanese proletariat, in cooperation with the peasantry, must struggle to achieve bourgeois democracy and bring about the proletarian revolution that is inevitable in the process of dialectical change. Such a struggle would be led by the Japanese Communist Party, which previously had been controlled by compromise, or Yamakawaism, but which, as a result of the recent theoretical struggle, had achieved complete political consciousness.

We see before us the movement of the working class, which having eliminated the consciousness of narrow unionism, has achieved the consciousness of political struggles involving the whole proletariat, i.e., the opposition of small peasants to the institutional remnants of autocracy, the resistance of the petty bourgeoisie to the reactionary bourgeoisie, the growing opposition of women to their subordinate position under autocracy, and the rise of the movement to liberate the colonies. With the working class in the lead, we must direct, promote, and transform the opposition of all these groups. . . . The objective of our struggles lies for the present in achieving bourgeois democracy. To this end, they must first be directed to overthrowing the institutional remnants of autocracy. The revolution directed against these remnants will, however, be transformed into a proletarian revolution through an inevitable and inherent dialectical process.

The party congress adopted a platform that was consistent with this strategy. It included planks calling for abolition of the imperial system; dissolution of the Diet; enactment of universal suffrage; establishment of freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association; abolition of all antilabor and antipeasant legislation; institution of an

eight-hour working day, and of company-paid unemployment insurance; confiscation of the land of large landowners, religious institutions, and the emperor; and enactment of a progressive income tax. There were also planks demanding the defense of the Soviet Union, nonintervention in the Chinese Revolution, antimilitarism and anti-war campaigns, and independence for colonies.²⁴

The congress also adopted the report on party rules that Sano Fumio had been assigned to prepare, and organized the party on the basis of the principle of democratic centralism. In general, the party was like other communist parties, though there were some differences because of the security problem. The party congress was designated the highest organ, with the central executive committee acting for it between sessions. In fact, power was centered in the executive committee; it appointed all committee chairmen, including those of district committees, and together with the district committees, established fractions in mass organizations. The district committees controlled party cells, maintained liaison between them and the central executive committee, and exercised party discipline with the consent of the central committee. Cells of five persons or less constituted the basic units of the party. In order to maintain maximum security, new cell members had to receive the unanimous approval of the cell as well as the approval of the district committee and the central executive committee.²⁵

The hold of Fukumotoism on the Goshiki convention was most clearly demonstrated by the character of the political and labor theses approved by the party. The political theses presented by Fukumoto, put forward the view that the Labor-Farmer Party was the only genuine left-wing legal mass party and that the communists should therefore help the Labor-Farmer Party to win over the masses on the right and become a national, united front party of all the oppressed classes.²⁶

An examination of the proletarian parties now in existence shows that the Japan Farmer Party is a reactionary party that seeks to cut off the peasants from the working class and make them lose sight of the class struggle. This party should be thoroughly denounced. The Social Democratic Party . . . is representative of bourgeois interests in the proletarian political movement. We must seek to intensify internal antagonism and contradictions within this party and free the proletariat from its influence. The guiding spirit of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party is unionism. . . . We must win over the masses of its members to the Labor-Farmer Party. The Labor-Farmer Party has become a national, united front party of the working class, the peasantry, and all the oppressed groups who work for bourgeois democracy. . . .

We must help the Labor-Farmer Party to form an opposition of all groups in order to attain the objective of the struggle—the achievement of democracy.

Watanabe Masanosuke presented the labor theses, in which the tendency to compromise (Yamakawaism) was condemned. The theses held that the struggle of the labor movement had been primarily an economic one, and that even Hyogikai, in its political struggle for economic welfare, showed a willingness to compromise. Communists were called upon to concentrate upon converting daily economic struggles into a militant political struggle, and in the process to help achieve the unification of the labor movement.²⁷

Because of his position in the communist group and in Hyogikai, Watanabe was perhaps Fukumoto's most important convert. Before he went to jail in April 1926, Watanabe had not paid much attention to Fukumoto's theories, but after his release in August, he began to accept them, largely because of conditions in the labor movement, where a continuation of the Sodomei-Hyogikai clash seemed inevitable.* Watanabe found comfort in Fukumoto's assertion that the split in the labor movement, though unfortunate, was bound to have occurred, and that such a split would promote the development of political consciousness among the working class.† Watanabe therefore accepted the general proposition that the strengthening of the position of the left wing through theoretical struggles was a prerequisite for the development of a united left-wing movement.²⁸

However, Watanabe, like other communists in Hyogikai, found it difficult, if not impossible, to strengthen the left through attacks on the right and center elements in the labor movement and simultaneously work for a merger of unions to prevent mass organizations

* At the urging of Hyogikai a conference to establish a General Federation of Labor and Peasant unions was held on June 20 at Osaka with some 25 unions and left-wing organizations represented. Sodomei, which reluctantly participated, the Seamen's Union, and the Naval Workers Union refused to consider any form of union with Hyogikai.

† Fukumoto had written about the labor movement in the January 1926 issue of *Marxism* as follows: "It is not desirable for the movement as a whole that the unions . . . split into opposing camps and organizations. . . . However, no matter how undesirable a split may be, the labor unions, which are long-term organizations for struggle by the masses, may be forced to split in the course of their long lives because of objective conditions. Under such circumstances, unions will better promote the whole movement by splitting" (Fukumoto, "Rono Seito," p. 23). In the July 1926 issue, he said: "The political consciousness of our working class has increased remarkably because of the split in Sodomei in May 1925 and the theoretical struggle that directly followed. This development of consciousness of the working class struggle stands in clear contrast with the limited political consciousness generated previously by labor unions" (Fukumoto, "Tomen no Ninmu," p. 24).

from remaining under their “opportunistic leadership.”²⁹ The communists formed a “Labor Left” in September 1926 for the former purpose, but dissolved it a year later because of the confusion it caused in the labor movement.³⁰ At the same time, working through Hyogikai, they infiltrated a “Unification Movement League” that worked for the merger of unions. The league had been established by intellectuals associated with *The Masses* in order to unite a group of centrist unions. Hyogikai at first opposed the league, but because of increasing hostility between the left and the right, changed its attitude and worked to transform it into a body uniting left and center unions under the slogans, “Establish a General Federation of Labor” and “Support the Labor-Farmer Party.”³¹

ANTI-FUKUMOTOISM

Although the Japanese Communist Party was reestablished, it was not as united as the Goshiki meeting seemed to indicate. A number of leading communists were opposed to Fukumoto and his views. Among them was Arahata, who, shortly after his release from jail in January 1927, was visited by Sano Fumio, chairman of the new central committee. Sano asked Arahata to accept the post of chief of the control committee (which maintained communication and discipline within the party), but Arahata firmly refused on the ground that he was opposed to Fukumoto. (Shortly thereafter he rejected the same offer when it was made by Ichikawa.) Arahata disliked Fukumoto personally, regarding him as an upstart; moreover, he had little sympathy for his theories. Although Arahata had advocated that membership in the “communist group” be limited to communists only, he rejected the concept of “unity through separation.” He also opposed the notion of “strength through theoretical struggles,” and he was disturbed by what he called a “discussion frenzy.”³²

Sano Manabu also rejected Fukumotoism and remained inactive in the party for a while. He objected not only to the new policies but also to the new central committee’s dismissal of Kitaura Sentaro from the party. Kitaura, who edited *The Proletarian News* while Sano was in jail, had refused to participate in the Goshiki convention and to prepare the report on the political and economic situation that had been assigned to him. He opposed Fukumotoism and maintained that the convention should have been postponed until the other leaders were released from jail. The central committee felt it had no alterna-

tive but to dismiss him, and did so on December 5.³³ Kitaura retaliated with an attack on Fukumoto and his views in the March 1927 issue of *Reconstruction*.³⁴ He argued that the Labor-Farmer Party, under the influence of Fukumotoism, intensified the conflict with the Japan Labor-Farmer Party, thereby preventing the development of a united party. This article set off a bitter controversy among party members and non-party members alike that continued into the middle of the year.³⁵

Janson, the Comintern representative in Japan, also opposed Fukumotoism and reported to Moscow his concern about its impact upon the emerging party. When he expressed his criticism of Fukumoto and his views, he was boycotted by the new Japanese communist leaders.³⁶ He instructed Nabeyama, who had been released from prison in October, to report to Bukharin on Fukumotoism and the opposition to it at the Seventh Enlarged Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern in November–December, 1926. According to Nabeyama, the leaders of the Comintern were deeply disturbed, and the Stalinists were ready to associate Fukumotoism with Trotskyism.³⁷

The central committee of the Japanese Communist Party could not ignore the opposition to Fukumoto. It met in the middle of January at Kusatsu spa in Gunma Prefecture and decided to send a delegation to Moscow to get Comintern help in settling the difference of views. Tokuda, Sano Fumio, Fukumoto, Watanabe, Nakao, and Kawai were appointed to form the delegation along with Nabeyama, who had remained in Moscow as the Japanese representative to the Profintern. Since most of the members of the central committee would be away for some time, a “remaining center” was selected; Ichikawa Shoichi was chairman, and Sano Manabu, Mitamura, Kokuryo, Sugiura, and Shiga the members. Ichikawa, Shiga (chief of the political division), and Mitamura (chief of the organizational division)—all supporters of Fukumoto—formed a small standing committee that held decision-making power. Sano Manabu continued to remain inactive because of his opposition to Fukumotoism, and in fact later considered leaving the party and founding an anti-Fukumoto periodical in cooperation with Yamakawa, Sakai, Arahata, and Kitaura. In the end, he decided to remain within the party and voice his criticisms there.*

* According to Arahata, Sano stayed because he was assured of his post as the editor of *The Proletarian News*. He resumed the post in April, but he did not openly oppose party policies. Arahata has described Sano as “a chap constantly wavering like a pendulum” (Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, p. 478). Kazama has presented much the same view (*Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 177–78).

While the Japanese Communist Party was preparing to send its delegation to Moscow, the Comintern began to take action on its own. Although the Comintern was pleased with the reestablishment of the party, it decided not to approve the party's policies or the composition of its central committee, and sent a telegram to Janson in Tokyo requesting that the committee and the supporters of both Fukumotoism and Yamakawaism assemble at Moscow without delay. The Comintern also requested Bukharin to make a preliminary study of the Japanese situation.³⁸

Janson acted quickly to carry out the wishes of the Comintern. The party decision to send a delegation was of great help; however, he still had the task of persuading Yamakawa and his followers to undertake the long journey to the Russian capital. He approached Yamakawa and Arahata through an employee of the Tokyo bureau of the Soviet news agency TASS. They declined his request, but provided him with written statements of their views.* Janson also contacted Sano Manabu, with whom he had conferred often. Evidently, Arahata and Sano agreed to accept the decision of the Comintern regarding the policies of the party.³⁹

Janson went to Moscow for the discussions. Arriving before the Japanese delegation, he found that Fukumotoism was already under attack by Japanese communists in Moscow. Takahashi Sadaki, then studying at the Lenin Institute, was pointing out to Japanese students at the Eastern Workers Communist University that the theories of Fukumoto were little more than an adaptation of the extremism of György Lukács, whose doctrines had been condemned by the Comintern.⁴⁰ Nabeyama, influenced by Takahashi, became convinced that Fukumotoism was a dangerous form of left-wing extremism.⁴¹

The delegation of the Japanese Communist Party arrived in Moscow in two groups in February and March, 1927. Watanabe, Nakao, and Kawai comprised the first group, and Tokuda, Fukumoto, and Sano Fumio, the other. Important changes had taken place in Russia and in the Comintern: Trotsky had been discredited and Zinoviev removed from office by the Stalinists; Bukharin had been elevated to

* Arahata declined on the grounds that he was outside the party by that time, and that his poor health would not permit such a long trip. However, he agreed to present his criticism of Fukumotoism. Yamakawa refused to submit a written statement directly to the Comintern, but forwarded a paper outlining his view on the condition that it would be taken as his personal opinion and used simply for Janson's information. Evidently this was the document on which the Comintern later based its criticism of Yamakawaism (Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, p. 479). See also Arahata, "Watakushi," pp. 57–58.

new status and responsibilities. It is difficult to trace the course of events at Moscow because the sources are not complete and vary in important details, but one thing is clear—one by one the Japanese delegates gave up Fukumotoism.⁴² Unfortunately, it is not clear to what extent their shift was the result of discussions among themselves or of the pressure of criticism by a committee on Japan formed by the Comintern. However, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that a “workers group,” comprising Watanabe, Nabeyama, Nakao, and Kawai, was able to make Tokuda the scapegoat for the rise of Fukumotoism on the ground that he failed to maintain proper and effective liaison between the Comintern and the Japanese communists.⁴³

The committee on Japan—Bukharin (chairman), C. Kuusinen, Bela Kun, J. T. Murphy, Katayama, O. Piatnitsky, B. A. Vasiliev, and Janson—met several times before and after the Eighth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, held between May 18 and May 30. At the first session, Watanabe reported on the Japanese labor movement since the 1923 arrests, and Murphy analyzed Japanese capitalism; at another, Fukumoto outlined his theories before an audience of some 30 persons. After the plenum, the committee met in late May, when Watanabe reported on the status of the Japanese Communist Party. In late June another meeting was held—this one in Bukharin’s office at Comintern headquarters.⁴⁴ On this occasion, Fukumoto again discussed his theories, and Watanabe again reported on the Japanese party and labor movements; both presentations were criticized by Bukharin.*

THE 1927 THESES

The committee appointed a subcommittee that included Bukharin, Murphy, and Katayama to work out theses on Japan. Murphy prepared a first draft, based largely on reports provided by the Japanese delegates, but Bukharin was not satisfied with the result and rewrote it completely. On July 15, the presidium of the Comintern met, with all the Japanese delegates in attendance, and approved Bukharin’s theses, reserving the right to make amendments in phraseology.† After

* According to Nabeyama, Fukumoto was treated like a child by Bukharin during the discussions, but would not raise his voice in protest. Nabeyama also states that Tokuda resigned his party offices without a word when accused of inconsistency about Fukumotoism and irresponsibility in his liaison work (Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 133; see also Fukumoto, “Jitsuroku,” February 1958, p. 94).

† The full text of the theses appears as Appendix D, pp. 295-308.

some changes in wording, a summary of the theses was published in *Pravda* on August 19. A Japanese translation of this version appeared in October issues of *The Masses* and *Literary Arts Front* (*Bungei Sensen*), but Japanese translations of the full text, which had been published in the English, German, and French editions of *International Press Correspondence*, did not appear until much later—in an appendix to the February 1928 issue of *Social Thought* (*Shakai Shiso*), a moderate socialist publication, and as a supplement to the March 1928 issue of *Marxism*.

For the most part, the July 1927 theses followed formulas laid down in the 1922 draft platform. However, like the 1926 theses, they reflected a recognition of changing conditions in Japan. The theses began by emphasizing Japan's transformation into a "first-class imperialist power" in Asia, and pointed out that the implications of this were threefold. First, as "the most dangerous foe of the Chinese revolution," Japanese imperialism was adopting an increasingly "open and active counterrevolutionary policy in China." Second, the struggle against the Chinese revolution had driven the Japanese imperialists to unite "with the British [and American] imperialists for joint action against the Chinese workers and peasants at the present time and for joint preparations for war against the U.S.S.R. in the more or less immediate future." Third, this joint opposition to the Chinese revolution would not eliminate "the profound and ever sharpening contradictions" between Japan and the other imperialist powers: "while jointly combating the Chinese revolution and preparing for a war against the U.S.S.R., the United States, Britain, and Japan are at the same time preparing for war among themselves—preparing for a bloody struggle for an imperialist partition of the Pacific basin."

Shifting to an analysis of Japan's domestic situation, the theses pointed out that Japanese capitalism had developed with unusual rapidity and, in contrast with Great Britain and the capitalist countries of Europe, was "undoubtedly now on the rising curve of development." This was quite different from Fukumoto's view of the decline of Japanese capitalism. As for Japan's modern political development, it was "a twofold process of lending to the old feudal forms a bourgeois content and of transforming the bourgeoisie into a counterrevolutionary force," which, despite its many differences with the feudal elements, was "nevertheless acting jointly with them against the labor and agrarian movements."

The course for the communist movement was clear. According to

the theses, there were in Japan both the objective prerequisites for a bourgeois-democratic revolution (the feudal remnants in the state structure, an acute agrarian problem) and the objective prerequisites for the rapid transformation of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution (the high level of concentration of capital, the growing number of trusts, the close relationship between the state and the trusts, the approximation of the Japanese economy to state capitalism, the unity of the bourgeoisie with the landed nobility). This continued advocacy of the two-stage theory of revolution by the Comintern was to create difficulties for some of the communist leaders. They were disturbed by what they regarded as a basic inconsistency between indications of bourgeois hegemony and the call for a bourgeois-democratic revolution. They felt that since the bourgeoisie held power the revolution should be directed against them. Therefore, the revolution should be a proletarian revolution. This was the view held by former party members like Yamakawa and his followers.

While emphasizing that Japan's economic and political development—the “objective revolutionary situation”—had prepared the way for a bourgeois-democratic revolution, the theses declared that Japan's backwardness in ideology—the “subjective revolutionary situation”—was a “great impediment and stumbling block.” The theses continued: “Neither the proletariat nor the peasants of Japan have any revolutionary traditions or any experience of struggle. The broad masses are only now awakening to political consciousness, and only an insignificant section at that. . . . Class sentiment and understanding of the necessity of class struggle are still stifled by nationalist poison or pacifist illusions among the broad masses.”

According to the theses, the “driving forces in the Japanese revolution” were the proletariat, the peasantry, and the urban petty bourgeoisie. Of the three, the proletariat was “the only consistent revolutionary class”:

The peasantry can be victorious in its struggle for land, in its struggle against feudal survivals, and the oppression of contemporary concentrated capitalism only under the leadership of the working class. The history of any country shows that the peasant movement is always doomed to failure unless it is led by the proletariat. . . . The isolation of the proletariat from the peasantry would be exceedingly dangerous, and would give the bourgeoisie a most effective weapon. An alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry is absolutely essential in the interests of both classes. But this alliance will be revolutionary and victorious only if the working class has hegemony.

The decisive role to be played by the Japanese Communist Party was made clear in the theses: “The Communist Party is the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat fighting for the fundamental historical interests of the working class as a whole. . . . Without a communist party there can be no struggle for a proletarian dictatorship.” It was as essential to have a party as it was to keep in mind the principal task of the proletariat—the establishment of the dictatorship; it was as essential to have a party as it was to preserve the main revolutionary thrust at every stage of the struggle and to give it precedence over everything else; it was as essential to have a party as it was to have that party actively participate in the day-to-day struggle and lead it. “Any other orientation” signified “a descent to opportunism” and resulted in the abandonment of the political struggle for the abolition of capitalism.

Clearly, any theory that slighted the importance of the party would be a calamitous error. On that basis, the theses criticized Yamakawism as a type of “liquidation” policy against which the party had to fight.

One of the principal errors of the Japanese communist leadership consisted in the underestimation and misunderstanding of the role of a communist party, and in the underestimation of its specific importance in the labor movement. The idea that a communist party can in any respect be supplanted by left trade union fractions or a broad workers’ and peasants’ party is fundamentally wrong. Without an independent, ideologically sound, disciplined, and centralized mass communist party there can be no victorious revolutionary movement. The struggle against every tendency toward liquidation, particularly those that found their expression in Comrade Hoshi’s [Yamakawa] policy is therefore the first task of the Japanese communists.

Fukumotoism was criticized just as positively, and at greater length:

The Communist Party of Japan will be in a position to solve its historical tasks only as a mass party. There is no doubt that the Communist Party of Japan must work energetically in raising its ideological level. It must definitely realize that “without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.” But it must just as definitely realize that without a revolutionary mass struggle, without actual and strong connections with the masses, theory is futile. The Communist Party of Japan must become a workers’ party not only in aim but also in composition.

Fukumoto was accused of isolating the party from “the mass organizations of the proletariat.” According to the theses, Fukumoto did not

analyze the concrete tasks facing the party and suggest “the methods of their solution given by history,” but instead proceeded “from artificially and arbitrarily formulated abstractions” and occupied himself “with the development and application of principles of logic.” He did not try “to understand actual relationships.” The significance of Fukumoto’s error was specified:

Mass organizations are, on the one hand, the reservoir from which the Communist Party gathers new forces, and on the other, a transmission belt that connects the vanguard with its class, with the whole mass of the workers. The larger the proletarian mass organizations, the greater the potential of the Communist Party’s reservoir and the broader the audience the communists can address. The policy of splitting up the mass organizations is therefore a policy of draining the reservoirs, limiting the scope of the party’s activity, weakening the connection with the masses. . . . Such a policy has nothing in common with bolshevism.

Isolation of the party from the masses meant “abandoning the struggle for the social democratic workers—abandoning the struggle to win over the centrist workers and abandoning efforts to expose the avowed reformism of the rightists and the tacit reformism of the leftists concealed by leftist social democratic phrases.” Such a course could not be tolerated. The communists were called on to struggle against the “opportunist and reformist leaders” of the Social Democratic Party, the “bought agents of the bourgeoisie,” and of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party; they were not, however, to estrange the leftist elements of the trade unions and mass parties, but instead were to fight within these organizations by “exposing the leaders and winning over the masses from them.” According to the theses, communists had to take active part in the everyday struggles of the working class and, by doing so, assume leadership in those struggles: “They must prove to the workers that they are the only staunch and consistent fighters for the interests of the proletariat.” The Communist Party was also directed to try to merge the Labor-Farmer Party with the Japan Labor-Farmer Party.

A discussion of tactics—particularly the united front—followed. The theses stated that “to win the social democratic and centrist workers, to conquer the trade unions and mass parties from within by means of the proposed united front tactic,” involved “certain difficulties.” Since “big mistakes” could be made by a young party without much experience in the class struggle, the Japanese communists were advised to study the mistakes committed by the Communist Party of

China in the Kuomintang, taking into consideration all of the differences between the conditions in China and Japan. The analysis continued:

In adopting the united front tactic, the Communist Party must not lose its identity. By no means must it submit to the influence of those whom it is combating; it must preserve its absolute independence, both ideologically and organizationally. . . . In speaking of a united front, one must have in mind not only a united front of the small illegal Communist Party with legal mass organizations such as the Labor-Farmer Party and the Unification Movement League, but also a united front of mass organizations (the Labor-Farmer Party, for instance), under the influence of the Communist Party, with the mass social democratic and centrist organizations.

The party was warned not to limit its actions to the struggle against capitalism. It must, at the same time, work for "the creation of a revolutionary workers' and peasants' bloc" and secure working-class hegemony in that bloc; organize the struggle of the peasantry to work for lower taxes and reduced rents, and later for seizure of the land; lead the struggle of the workers and peasants for the democratization of the Japanese state, "without forgetting the general goal of the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution"; and struggle "against the menace of imperialist war," as well as "against Japanese intervention in China and against preparation for war against the U.S.S.R."

On the basis of the strategy and tactics in the theses, the Japanese Communist Party was directed to advance the following program of action and to issue slogans based on it: opposition to "the menace of imperialist war"; nonintervention in the Chinese revolution; defense of the U.S.S.R.; "absolute independence" for the colonies; dissolution of parliament; abolition of the monarchy; universal suffrage for everyone 18 or over; right of assembly, association, coalition, etc., freedom of speech and of the press; an eight-hour working day; unemployment insurance; repeal of antilabor laws; confiscation of the estates of the emperor, landlords, the state, and the church; and establishment of a progressive income tax. This action program constituted a minimum program. It was to be linked with "the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government and the slogan of the proletarian dictatorship" and would provide the basis for progress "in the political education of the proletarian masses, in the organization of the workers' and peasants' bloc, and in the preparation of a real revolutionary mass

struggle.” According to the theses, the struggle for these demands would lead to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Though the way was clear, the road was not without difficulties. The theses sounded a note of caution and then concluded on a note of optimism:

This struggle will be successful only if there is a sound and ideologically consistent Leninist discipline—a centralized and mass communist party—fighting jointly with the world Communist Party marching shoulder to shoulder with the entire Communist International.

The admission by the Japanese delegation of its mistakes and its adoption of all directives and decisions of the Communist International guarantee that the Communist Party of Japan will be able to overcome the deviations existing within it, will be able to take a correct political and organizational course in its work, and will be able to cope with the great tasks raised before it by history.

The last important business transacted at Moscow was the formation of a new central committee of the Japanese Communist Party, composed of Watanabe, Arahata, Ichikawa Shoichi, Nabeyama, Sugiura, Nakao, Kokuryo, Sano Manabu, and Yamamoto. Sano Fumio (who left the party after his return to Japan), Tokuda, and Fukumoto were dropped from the committee.⁴⁵ The composition of the new committee was based upon a recommendation of the Comintern after consultation with the Japanese delegates; it clearly represented a victory for the delegation’s “worker faction.”⁴⁶

ACTIVITIES IN JAPAN

While the leading members of the Japanese Communist Party were away in Moscow, the caretakers, backed by the efforts of some 125 party members, continued to operate effectively through Hyogikai and the Labor-Farmer Party.⁴⁷ The activities of both of these organizations, and of other left-wing bodies as well, gained momentum from the economic unrest arising from a financial panic in March–April 1927. In a situation in which factories were closed and production in general curtailed, wages cut or withheld, and workers laid off, all the left-wing organizations increased their agitation and propaganda activities. The Labor-Farmer Party launched a “Diet dissolution petition campaign” in order to put pressure on the government to advance the date of the general election, in which the new parties would participate, and to expand its own influence among the masses.⁴⁸ It was

particularly interested in establishing a united front with the center Japan Labor-Farmer Party.

Hyogikai was active with other labor unions in the establishment of councils of factory representatives in the most important industrial areas of the country. Hyogikai leaders had been urging that all economic struggles be developed into a “political struggle of the whole proletariat” to increase the workers’ “consciousness of political action.” Now they shifted their ground. At Hyogikai’s third convention, in May 1927, the emphasis was on economic issues. A new platform was adopted that concentrated on the “concrete immediate demands of the workers.” Its planks included demands for an eight-hour day and forty-eight-hour week for industrial workers, and a six-hour day and thirty-six-hour week for miners; enactment of an unemployment compensation law, a law to protect female and child laborers, and a labor union law; revision of factory, mining, and maritime laws, and of health and insurance laws; abolition of restrictive legislation like the Peace Preservation Law; and freedom of workers to join political parties. The platform also called for “a total struggle against fascism.”⁴⁹ The Hyogikai leaders urged unions to return to economic struggles and to eliminate the type of union that set itself political tasks as well as economic ones. They felt that a political struggle by labor was no longer appropriate, because the Japanese proletariat had already acquired political consciousness, the Labor-Farmer Party had been formed and was carrying on the struggle for democracy, and the Japanese Communist Party had been reestablished.

The Proletarian News stepped up its campaign against capitalism on both the political and economic fronts. In April, for example, it appealed for a united front of the working masses to fight “the most reactionary political body of the imperialist bourgeoisie”—the Seiyukai Party. The issue of July 9 continued in the same vein: “For the present, the focus of all political struggles for the proletariat is to fight for the freedom of speech, assembly, association, and press, and to rally all oppressed people for such a struggle. The political struggle is against autocracy of the military clique and against bureaucratic centralization.” On the economic side, the editorial of May 24 was typical of this period. It read in part: “It is a proper and just demand that the government set up a special relief fund to save workers from economic distress rather than save capitalists with 900 million yen, that it enforce an unemployment allowance law, that fertilizers and farming implements be nationalized under the control of the proletariat, that

the savings of small depositors be guaranteed, and that heavy and unjust taxes be abolished.”⁵⁰

On the international front, the communists were active in helping to establish the League Against Intervention in China. Both the Communist Party and Hyogikai followed the Comintern line, attacking Chiang Kai-shek and calling for support of the Hankow regime and the Chinese Communist Party.

Members of the Japanese Communist Party began actively reassessing the “objective conditions” of Japanese society for purposes of strategy and tactics. It had become increasingly clear to many of them that the situation in Japan, especially the relationship of the bourgeoisie and the “absolutist, autocratic forces,” had changed dramatically during the past decade, and that there was “pressing need for amending our general strategy and laying it down more precisely.”⁵¹

Several party leaders began outlining their views in the journal *Marxism*. One was Murayama Toshiro, a party organizer in the Kansai region, who in the April 1927 issue analyzed the existing situation in terms of what seemed to be a combination of the views of both Fukumoto and Yamakawa.⁵² Murayama emphasized that the Japanese bourgeoisie, already in the stage of imperialism as a link in world capitalism, had not swept away the “absolutist forces” but had become reactionary instead, as its economic position worsened with the decline of world capitalism. The bourgeoisie had played down the notion of “contradiction or opposition to the absolutist remnants,” and in fact had transformed itself from an opposition force to a supporting force. In Murayama’s words, “In the present process of history, the basic political contradictions—the contradiction between the absolutist remnants and all the people and the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—are being transformed into a single contradiction between the reactionary political forces and the groups of suppressed people.” Therefore, he asserted, the strategy of the proletariat had to be as follows: (1) objective of the struggle—a bourgeois democracy; (2) allies in the struggle—all suppressed people, including the petty bourgeoisie; and (3) organization of the struggle—a mass, united front party (the Labor-Farmer Party), with the proletariat as the vanguard, representing the interests of all suppressed people.

Ichikawa Shoichi, speaking for the majority of the party members, took exception to Murayama’s analysis.⁵³ First, he criticized the tendency to underplay the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the absolutist elements. According to Ichikawa, this contradiction consti-

tuted the most fundamental weakness of the ruling forces and provided a basis on which the proletariat could direct the struggle against absolutism. Second, he felt that Murayama did not give sufficient emphasis to the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and thus did not clarify the role of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. "Is it not such a fundamental contradiction that makes the proletariat take the lead of all the oppressed people?" Ichikawa answered his own question:

Our proletariat must first be the spearhead or leading force in carrying out the anti-absolutist struggle of all the oppressed people; by so doing, it can isolate the imperialist bourgeoisie and cut off the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie from the bourgeoisie's direction and influence. . . . [It] must at the same time conduct a bold struggle against the imperialist bourgeoisie and hence against fascism, as well as against petty bourgeois, or men-shevik, opportunism. In this way, it can prepare itself for the next stage of the struggle—the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.⁵⁴

Ichikawa concluded that Murayama was still influenced by "eclecticism, or Yamakawaism," in his advocacy of a united front party, and that he therefore minimized the role of the proletariat's political party—the Communist Party.* Ichikawa stressed the need to struggle against right-wing opportunists and the Yamakawaists. He did not overlook the value of the Labor-Farmer Party as a means of effecting an alliance between the proletariat and other groups of oppressed people, but he urged that the communists establish hegemony within it.

In brief, Ichikawa summarized the important strategic considerations as follows: (1) objective of the struggle—bourgeois democracy; (2) main strength of the struggle—the proletariat; (3) basic organization of the struggle—the Communist Party; (4) direct allies—the poor peasants and the working petty bourgeoisie; (5) allied organization—the united front party, or Labor-Farmer Party; and (6) indirect allies—colonial and semicolonial peoples, especially the Chinese. Ichikawa emphasized the need for the Japanese Communist Party to broaden the basis of its support, criticizing Fukumotoism as "left-wing infantilism."

The Murayama-Ichikawa controversy stimulated other communists to express their views on strategy, especially their views of state power and the need for a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Both Sano Manabu and Shiga contributed articles to the August issue of *Marxism* in

* The contributors to *Marxism* did not, of course, use such terms as "communism" and "communist party." Therefore, the authors are required at times to substitute "communist" for "proletariat."

which they emphasized the continuing hold on state power of “the absolutist forces”—peers, bureaucrats, the military clique, and big landowners—“interlocked with finance capital and with industrial capital under the financiers’ control.”⁵⁵ Both agreed that the bourgeoisie had turned reactionary, and that workers and peasants had to “open the way for bourgeois democracy by their struggle for freedom and thereby liberate their classes in the future.” Sano characterized the revolutionary process as follows: “The achievement of political freedom will generate the momentum . . . to ensure that the working class, through freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association, will unify all opposition forces and become their spearhead, and reduce the power of the absolutist forces, and, as a result, enable the working class to conduct the struggle directly against its fundamental antagonist, finance capital.” Shiga added: “If the proletariat can achieve political liberation in the struggle against autocracy, it will deprive finance capital of its political prop . . . and will in turn overthrow the rule of capital. . . . This is the main reason why, for the present, the proletariat should fight for bourgeois democracy.”

The need to reassess “objective conditions” was not the only reason for the many statements of strategy and tactics; the communists also had to refute the views of others who claimed to represent the cause of “genuine Marxism-Leninism.” On the one hand, there was the group of intellectuals and publicists who had founded *The Masses* in March 1926, among them Oyama Ikuo, Kuroda, Suzuki Mosaburo, and Takano Minoru. In the September 1926 issue of *The Masses*, Suzuki and Urata advocated the formation of a centrist left-wing party and invited criticism from the editors of *Marxism*.⁵⁶ Later, the group announced its support of the Labor-Farmer Party, while branding Fukumotoism as “left-wing infantilism” or “sectarian separatism.”

Another group in opposition to the communists was made up of those former party members who had remained close to Yamakawa. They were active in the Labor-Farmer Party, through which they hoped to develop a united front party, but they found it increasingly difficult to remain in the party, as Fukumoto-inspired elements infiltrated it and succeeded in capturing the leadership. Among them, the most militant in his criticism of Fukumotoism was the former Waseda University lecturer Inomata.

Inomata had been a contributor to *Marxism* in its early years, but upon his release from jail in January 1927, he found it dominated by Fukumotoists. For this reason, he did not rejoin the party. However, he considered himself a communist, and intimated that if the party

leadership were to revert to the proper line, he would return to the fold.* He held views very different from the Fukumotoists and from other communists, and began to publish them in various journals. He believed that Japanese capitalism had not yet begun to decline or move downward in its economic position, but that, on the contrary, the Japanese economy was generally “on the upswing.”⁵⁷ He also believed in “the predominance of the bourgeoisie over the civilian and military bureaucracy, who had been the rulers of the state.”⁵⁸ In his view, Japanese capitalism had already reached the “stage of imperialism” or the “stage of monopoly.” As evidence, he cited the control of production by big business, the concentration of capital, and the formation of cartels. According to Inomata, capitalism dominated the political world, with the bourgeoisie controlling government through party supremacy in the legislative and executive branches. In November 1927, after having been denied the right to express his views in *Marxism*, he published his most influential article of the period—“The Political Position of the Bourgeoisie in Contemporary Japan”—in the journal *The Sun* (*Taiyo*).⁵⁹ This piece pushed him to the forefront of Japan’s leftist intellectual world because it provided a theoretical basis for refuting Fukumotoism. Inomata’s powerful writing, his sharp, analytical mind, and his consistency of argument had considerable appeal, particularly in view of Fukumoto’s increasingly tiresome prose style.

Inomata’s contribution to the discussion of the development of capitalism was his analysis of the relationship of the bourgeoisie to the landowners, the peasantry, and the urban petty bourgeoisie of Japan. In his article in *The Sun*, he denied that Japan’s landowners were politically important, and emphasized the fact that, unlike Russia and Germany, Japan had not experienced a fierce conflict between the capitalist class and the landowners. He discussed this in some detail:

As capitalism began to grow rapidly following the changes of the Meiji Restoration, the big landowners of Japan did not seize the real power of government. They did not have the kind of privileges that would have made them resist the bourgeoisie. One historical task of the restoration government was to abolish the feudal system of landownership and open the way for the development of capitalism. Therefore, the government

* Says Suzuki Mosaburo: “Inomata Tsunao seems to have had a great nostalgia for the Second Japanese Communist Party. He seemed willing to join the party if invited to do so, once the serious errors in the party’s policies and program were corrected. When he realized that Yamakawa and Sakai did not share this view, he appeared greatly disappointed” (Suzuki Mosaburo, *Aru Shakaishugisha*, p. 194).

could not be one of the landowner class. Resistance to the autocratic government after the restoration came from the famous democratic ("Liberty and People's Rights") movement, which was a united front of varied social groups and classes. . . . The landowner class . . . was, of course, one of the main forces mobilized in the early democratic movement. On the other hand, the proletariat was still immature, and the bourgeoisie could not play a leading part in the movement because of the government's role in developing capitalism. Therefore, the movement ended in an unfortunate compromise [the Meiji Constitution]. . . . In the early political parties, the majority of members were landowners. Yet the political power of clan government did not fall into the hands of the landed class, but into those of the bureaucracy and military clique. The political parties that were pitted against the bureaucracy and the military were gradually to become instruments of the bourgeoisie. As this process went on, the franchise was expanded, causing a change in class relations in the Diet—the decline of the agrarian forces. The recent realization of universal suffrage means a decisive victory of the capitalist class, not only over the landowners but also over the bureaucracy and the military. This was reflected in the establishment of the principle of party cabinets, an historical turning point in the rise of the capitalist class's political position.

Even more important, Inomata maintained that Japan's landowners had become part of the bourgeoisie. He noted that as capitalism developed, most of the landowners, who collected ground rents, became capitalists. They converted the profits derived from their tenants into bank deposits, public bonds, and securities, instead of reinvesting in land and agriculture. Several, he pointed out, were company directors, presidents of banks, and big moneylenders.

Inomata's theory of the transformation of the landowning class into elements of the bourgeoisie quite naturally colored his view of the peasant movement in Japan and was decisive in his formulation of revolutionary strategy. Writing of the peasant movement, he declared: "The tenants' movement, which developed in the last decade, is a struggle against the class that receives in the form of farm rents about one-third of the total agricultural production of Japan. . . . However, since the landowning class has lost the real power of ruling with respect to the state power, the class basically opposed to the peasantry is the monopolistic, imperialist bourgeoisie." Inomata asserted that though the peasantry was not yet conscious of this opposition, the mass movement in farm villages was forming a common political front with the urban proletarian movement. He gave several reasons: the interchange of labor between agrarian and urban areas; the development of the tenants' movement under the direct influence of the proletarian

movement; the transformation of the landowning class into the bourgeoisie; and the impoverishment of the peasantry—the material basis for the peasants' movement—that was the result of “the heavy burden of imperialism in the form of taxes” and the fact that Japanese capitalism had entered the phase of monopoly. Most important, said Inomata, a great number of poor peasants and tenants were also semi-proletarians, that is, wage earners.

Inomata characterized the urban petty bourgeoisie as another political opponent of monopoly capitalism; however, he found that the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie, like the landowners, tended to support the ruling capitalists: “The small property owners, high-salaried men, and professional men can no longer form a political force with their own demands and policies in the period of monopoly. Its ideology is characterized by the hope of improving its lot on the basis of capitalism.” He continued:

The upper petty bourgeoisie is essentially dependent on the big capitalists. . . . It is easily won over in elections, and as the intellectual class, has a great influence on public opinion. The formation of this group and its political awakening were the factors that caused the bourgeoisie to give the people limited universal suffrage, an act that reflects the establishment of the rule of monopoly capitalism. The ruling bourgeoisie finds its political support in the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie.

By contrast, said Inomata, the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie had for the most part been transformed into proletarians. He noted that in the period of the peaceful development of capitalism, this group, together with the poor peasantry, had supplied the wage workers, and that in the phase of monopoly capitalism, its economic condition was becoming worse, with increasing unemployment and a lowering of income. “Its members are semi-proletarians,” he asserted; “they are driven to partial opposition by discontent and unrest. The spontaneous mass uprisings known as the Rice Riots of 1918 had their origin in this group.” On the basis of this analysis, Inomata concluded that the political strategy of the ruling bourgeoisie was to isolate the proletariat by using the landowners and owner-cultivators to control the poor peasants, and the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie to control the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie and the less conscious workers.

Inomata had now laid the foundation for the central purpose of the article—to define the relationship of the “absolutist forces” and the bourgeoisie. The implications of this relationship for the strategy of

the proletariat were obvious to him. What Inomata was concerned about was "the rising view among some Japanese Marxists that the proletarian class had to direct its struggle against the feudal absolutist forces"—a view that raised the question of the political position of the bourgeoisie. "We recognize the strong holdover of feudal absolutism," he wrote. "But we should remember that it remains as an institutional expression and as an ideology. The political forces of feudal absolutism are functioning only as remnants of the past. They have already lost their class, material basis." Reiterating that Japan's landlords had been transformed into bourgeoisie and that, because they had little influence over the control of production, they could not expect any longer to seize political power as an independent social class, Inomata proceeded to an analysis of the aristocracy of Japan. In his view, the aristocracy did not represent any particular social class; it could not be equated with big landowners. "We also have in Japan poor peers, bourgeois nobles, and military and bureaucratic nobles." Nor did the bureaucracy and military represent any particular social group. Therefore, they had no basis on which to oppose the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, "the imperialist bourgeoisie makes their existence possible."

Thus, declared Inomata, although the "reins of government" had passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie, Japan had neither political democracy nor political freedom. This was not because the old ruling groups remained as a powerful political force, but because the bourgeoisie came to power through compromises and without staging a decisive mass struggle. The Japanese bourgeoisie did not stage such a struggle against the old ruling groups because if it had mobilized the masses on a political front, it would have been forced to give more political freedom to the people than it considered necessary and would have thus undermined its own position of power. The bourgeoisie, however, had no need for such a struggle, "for the old ruling groups . . . lost their material basis too early to remain as a powerful political opponent."

Inomata concluded that the struggle for political democracy must be a struggle of the masses led by the proletariat against the reactionary bourgeoisie. He continued: "No group other than the proletariat can take the lead in the struggle for political progress. Sooner or later, the proletariat will win support from the masses of the semi-proletariat, including needy peasants. Victory in the struggle depends upon mass support. If its tactics are effective, it may even neutralize the upper strata of the petty bourgeoisie."

Inomata insisted that the "historic struggle for progress led by the

proletariat must include in itself a struggle against reactionary absolutist ideology." He wrote:

This latter struggle is very important. Ideologies have weight in government. The Japanese bourgeoisie, which has made use of feudalistic, absolutist ideology to achieve power, has many weaknesses that can be exploited by the semifeudal reactionaries. As a result, when its potential supporters, the petty bourgeoisie, begin to demand more democracy, the bourgeoisie finds its hands bound by conciliatory policies. To fight the anachronistic reactionaries means therefore to fight the bourgeoisie. And by so doing, the proletariat can fight effectively against petty bourgeois reformism.

In closing, Inomata explained that "the historical struggle for political progress in Japan" would culminate in a bourgeois-democratic revolution. He was careful to make his meaning clear: The bourgeois-democratic revolution did not mean that the bourgeoisie would carry out a revolution against the remaining feudal forces; on the contrary, the bourgeoisie would oppose a revolution, not because it feared to lose its political support, but because it realized that a mass struggle would destroy its material basis, and pave the way for the victory of the proletariat. Inomata was only a step away from espousing the concept of a single process of revolution, or permanent revolution.

THE RONOHA

The critics of party leadership and ideology were encouraged when the outline of the 1927 theses appeared in the August 19 issue of *Pravda*. They felt that the Comintern, in criticizing the communist movement in Japan, supported their views on basic points, e.g., the continuing development of capitalism, the political predominance of the bourgeoisie, and a strategy for revolution based upon a common proletarian party movement under the hegemony of the proletariat. Inomata, for example, was convinced that the views expressed in the theses coincided with his view of the revolutionary process. He became even more insistent that the bourgeois-democratic revolution would quickly develop into a socialist revolution. In December he wrote:

Why then will the bourgeois-democratic revolution immediately develop into the proletarian revolution? It is not, as some writers claim, because that revolution will overthrow the feudal absolutist forces and deprive the bourgeoisie of its political base. . . . Rather, it is because with that revolu-

tion the hegemony of the proletariat will be near completion. When the proletariat establishes an alliance with broad groups of people, particularly with the poor peasants, the bourgeoisie will then lose its true political base, the petty bourgeois groups. . . .

The coming revolution cannot be separated from the proletarian revolution. Those writers who . . . insist that the remaining feudal absolutist forces are the target of the struggle in the immediate historical phase wrongly separate the two revolutions and draw an analogy between Japan and China to the benefit of the bourgeoisie. To neglect to make it clear to the working class that the prospect of the first revolution turning into the second is the decisive factor at every stage of the struggle is to deviate from “the direction of Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics.”⁶⁰

In December, Yamakawa, Sakai, Arahata, Kitaura, Inomata, and Yoshikawa began to issue a new “theoretical journal of militant Marxists” called *Labor-Farmer* (*Rono*). They were soon joined by other veteran socialists and left-wing intellectuals, including Suzuki Mosaburo, Aono, Kuroda, and Takano Minoru.⁶¹ The initial issue of *Labor-Farmer* focused attention on the political and economic power of the bourgeoisie and the capitalistic landlords, and raised the fundamental question for the proletariat and peasantry: “In what battle formation and with what tactics can we fight effectively against the united front of the bourgeoisie and the landlords?” The Labor-Farmer faction, or Ronoha, as the group was soon to be called, answered that question in great detail in a number of articles in the initial issue. Those by Yamakawa and Inomata are especially noteworthy.⁶²

Yamakawa was very clear about the basic task of the proletariat. “The object of the present political struggle is the political power of the imperialist bourgeoisie. This is almost beyond question. The fact that the present stage of capitalism in our country is the period of monopoly finance capitalism generally indicates this.” According to Yamakawa, the Meiji Restoration was basically a bourgeois revolution against absolutism, but because the bourgeoisie was weak, the lower-samurai (the bureaucrats and military clique) played the major part in it. However, their bureaucratic clan government was not a democratic government, but a transitional, middle government.

Yamakawa maintained that subsequently a complete bourgeois government came into existence. “The bureaucracy and the military clique at one time seemed to be growing into a force opposed to the bourgeoisie, but without an economic foundation of their own, they were quickly assimilated by the bourgeoisie.” He characterized the bourgeoisie as “a reactionary imperialist force”—corresponding to the

stage of imperialism in world capitalism. He insisted that the communist classification of the Seiyukai Party as the party of the landowning interests, and the Kenseikai as a party of the urban commercial and industrial interests, was no longer valid. "The decisive factor today is the internal differences within monopoly finance capitalism."

According to Yamakawa, it thus became the task of the proletariat and its vanguard to take up the struggle for democracy that the bourgeoisie had abandoned, thereby providing the fundamental conditions for socialism. To this end, the proletariat and its vanguard had to mobilize all classes and social groups opposed to the imperialist bourgeoisie, including the lower strata of the petty bourgeoisie, to form a powerful antibourgeois front and political force: "The duty of the proletariat and its vanguard is to establish the basic conditions for the transition from capitalism to a new social order." What Yamakawa had in mind was the creation of a single, mass political party as the instrument for "a decisive victory" in the proletarian revolution that would develop from the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Inomata wrote even more forcefully than Yamakawa, especially in analyzing the stages of revolution. Although he regarded the writers in *Marxism* as members in the same camp, but with "different views," he was not sparing in his criticism of them. He continued to attack Murayama, Ichikawa, and other communists for making "the achievement of bourgeois democracy" the main objective of the struggle of the proletariat and its allies. He accused them of ignoring the basic facts that (1) the remnants of absolutism had lost their class basis and could not prevent the progress of history; (2) political power had passed into the hands of the bourgeoisie; (3) the opposition of the bourgeoisie to the remaining absolutist forces was not a fundamental one, though such opposition existed; and (4) Japanese capitalism—the material basis for the prolonged survival of the absolutist forces—was serving as a medium for the assimilation of those forces by the imperialist bourgeoisie. According to Inomata, "The starting point of the bourgeois revolution will be that of the proletarian revolution. . . . These two will be condensed into one stage instead of being extended to two stages." He charged that the analysts in *Marxism* were deluded in believing that the present stage of revolution could be separated from the next stage in a country with "highly developed state capitalism." He was convinced that their strategy and their tactics—especially the tendency of some to overemphasize the role of the Labor-Farmer Party and to underestimate the role of the vanguard elements, or com-

munists—would “lead the proletariat to dash straight along the course of petty bourgeois and menshevik opportunism.” He concluded by declaring: “The struggle for democracy is very important. But it is important as one aspect of the whole struggle against imperialism and will be achieved only in this sense.” The proletariat would not mobilize its main power simply for the achievement of democracy; only when the drive for democracy was linked to the main struggle against imperialism would it become a proletarian struggle.

The Ronoha position developed by Yamakawa, Inomata, and others challenged the strategy and tactics of the Japanese Communist Party in two fundamental ways. First, the members of the Ronoha denied the power of feudal absolutism and focused on a single revolution against the bourgeoisie. Second, with the exception of Inomata, the members of the Ronoha minimized or denied the need for a communist party, emphasizing instead the need for a mass party of workers and peasants as a united front against “the despotic, imperialist bourgeoisie.” Since the Ronoha single-revolution theory eliminated the need to attack the imperial system, the group was able to remain a legal segment of the left-wing movement for a decade. However, because of its doctrinal extremism, the Ronoha tended to be just as isolated from the mainstream of the left-wing movement as was the illegal Communist Party, and ultimately, although it had no relationship with international communism, it invited suppression by the authorities.

The Ronoha never became a political force because it never developed any organization or program. It tended instead to represent only a point of view—one whose influence was confined largely to intellectuals. (Yamakawa and Inomata, for example, were more interested in theory than in practice.) Consequently, the Ronoha was never able to develop a foundation from which to work to achieve political unity in the Japanese left wing; its influence was probably more significant in the academic community, where many “progressives” in history and the social sciences found the Ronoha interpretation of Japan’s modern development attractive. The weaknesses of the Ronoha were not apparent in 1927, however. At that time, it represented a serious challenge to the leaders of the Japanese Communist Party and to their two-stage theory of revolution.

Chapter 6

Suppression of the Party, 1928

The party members who participated in the discussions with the Comintern began returning to Japan in November 1927. Shortly after their return, in cooperation with Ichikawa Shoichi and Sano Manabu, the members of the party started implementing some of the decisions made at Moscow. They convened a secret party meeting on December 2 at an inn in the mountains near Nikko, some 80 miles north of Tokyo. The returnees formally reported on what had happened in the Russian capital, and the others—Ichikawa, Shiga, Mitamura, Sano, Mizuno Shigeo, Murayama, Sugiura, and Kokuryo—informed them of recent developments in Japan.¹

The conferees confirmed a new central committee based on the recommendations made at Moscow—Sano (chairman), Watanabe, Nabeyama, Ichikawa, Sugiura, Kokuryo, Nakao, and Yamamoto—with the first four constituting a special executive group. Arahata, who had been named to the committee at Moscow, was not included. He was invited to rejoin the party, but refused. He later explained that he could not get along with Tokuda and the two Sanos.* (Arahata's explanation is rather puzzling, since neither Sano Fumio, who later quit the party, nor Tokuda held an official position.) The new central committee was dominated by the "worker elements"; only Sano and Ichikawa could be classified as "intellectuals." Watanabe was, for all practical purposes, the party leader, and tended to become the chief interpreter of the new theses, which were officially approved at the Nikko meeting.²

The party was reorganized as follows: Chairman—Sano Manabu;

* Nabeyama was one of those who tried to persuade Arahata to rejoin the party. Arahata said, "Regretfully, I refused to return to the party. But I was not sorry about quitting the party, but because I was leaving Nabeyama, with whom I had been on friendly terms for a long time" (Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, p. 484). Nabeyama maintains that Arahata did not return because he felt an obligation toward the Ronoha. At the same time, says Nabeyama, Arahata was narrow-minded. "Except for me, he did not like the central committee members" (Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 119). Arahata's refusal was reported to Janson at Shanghai by Kawai Etsuzo, who relayed an invitation from Janson to Arahata to come to Shanghai, which Arahata refused (Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 201–2).

organization department—Watanabe Masanosuke (chief), Nakao, Mitamura, and Kawai; labor union department—Nabeyama (chief), Sugiura, Matsuo, and Kokuryo; agitation-propaganda department—Ichikawa Shoichi (chief), Koreeda Kyoji, Fukumoto, and Shiga; peasant union department—Sano Manabu (chief, appointed in January 1928), Murayama, Inamura Ryuichi, and Kawamura Tsuneichi; chief of the secretariat—Mizuno; chief of the printing office—Saito Hisao. Nakao, Kasuga, Fujii Tetsuo, Kawai Etsuzo, and Mitamura were made chairmen of local committees for the Kanto, Kansai, Kyushu, Shinetsu, and Hokkaido regions, respectively. Fractions were formed for the mass organizations, including the Labor-Farmer Party, Hyogikai, and the peasant unions. Their members were Asano, Yamamoto, and Minami Kiichi—Labor-Farmer Party; Sugiura, Matsuo, and Noda Ritsuta—Hyogikai; and Chikauchi Konnai and Kiyohara Kazutaka (alias Saiko Mankichi)—peasant unions.

Several other important decisions were made at Nikko. The conferees adopted a new policy that called for the organization of the party on the basis of cells in factories in order to establish closer contact with the masses, agreed to publish a party newspaper, instructed Watanabe to prepare a summary of the new theses for use in “educating” party members, and designated Ichikawa, Sano, and Nabeyama to write political and organizational programs based upon the theses in consultation with Watanabe.³

Shortly after the Nikko meeting, the party took other actions. The central committee sent Kawai to Shanghai to report the results of the conference to Janson and to obtain financial help. Kawai carried out the mission successfully and returned with Comintern funds in the amount of several thousand dollars. In mid-January 1928, Ichikawa and Nabeyama also contacted Janson in Shanghai and received an additional \$5,000.⁴ The central committee began to plan a party convention to be held in March 1928. Mitamura, Kawai, Fujii, and Kasuga—all chairmen of local committees outside the Kanto area—formulated policies to promote the party’s growth and to reorganize its local chapters. They sent out organizers to various industrial sectors in the country to establish branches.

The party took steps to put itself before the public for the first time. It began to distribute handbills and short pamphlets under its own name. These emphasized both general slogans such as “Government of Workers and Peasants” and “Dictatorship of the Proletariat” and the specific action policies outlined in the 1927 theses. The party also

commenced publication of its first official newspaper, *Red Flag* (*Sekki*), on February 1, 1928. This so-called central organ of the party was to be published semimonthly; some 1,500 copies of the first issue were run off in mimeographed form. Watanabe spoke for the party in an editorial in the initial issue:

The Japanese Communist Party—the revolutionary ranks of the ablest and most militant vanguard elements of the Japanese proletariat—has been fighting at the head of all struggles over the past seven years. Today it openly makes its appearance before the public through *Red Flag*. The party is going to carry out faithfully and bravely the task of organizing and directing every revolutionary struggle of all working people under the strict hegemony of the proletariat.⁵

The party also published several regional newspapers: in the Kyoto-Osaka-Kobe area, *Class War*; in Nagano, *Shinetsu Red Flag* (*Shinetsu Sekki*); and in Hokkaido, *Hokkaido News* (*Hokkaido Tsushin*).

FORMULATING PARTY POLICY

The fullest expression of party strategy and tactics designed for public consumption appeared in a pamphlet entitled “Appeal to the Revolutionary Workers on the Occasion of the Publication of the Political Theses of the Japanese Communist Party.”⁶ In this pamphlet, party leaders called on the masses to form a worker-peasant revolutionary bloc to fight the political bloc of capitalists and landlords, and appealed to the proletariat to take the lead in forming such a revolutionary bloc.

The bourgeoisie of today is incapable of solving the land problem and of destroying landlordism. Only the proletariat can meet the revolutionary demands of the peasantry for the solution of the land problem and the elimination of the feudal remnants. It follows that as an opposition force to the existing political power, a political bloc of the working class and the peasantry must be formed.

The “Appeal” continued:

The proletariat must carry through its basic struggle against the bourgeoisie, strengthen and expand its organization (the Communist Party) and, in the meantime, give positive support to the revolutionary demands of the peasant masses and represent them to the maximum through its party. By so doing, it can prove that it is the sole ally and leader of the peasants. Unless it wins the confidence of the peasants and carries out

a democratic revolution in a firm alliance with them, the proletariat cannot open the way to the struggle for its own liberation—the proletarian revolution.

The party leaders identified the immediate objective of the struggle of the proletariat: the achievement of bourgeois democracy and “the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants.” They continued to deny the validity of the theory of a direct proletarian revolution, but they acknowledged that changes in objective conditions brought about by the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution would make feasible a rapid development of the proletarian revolution.

How the existing objective conditions are changed will depend on the subjective conditions of the revolution and on the course of events from now on. But at least the following can be foreseen: (a) the collapse of the capitalist-landlord government and the establishment of a worker-peasant government; (b) an agrarian revolution, including the elimination of feudal land systems and of the landlords, as well as the creation of a completely democratic system; (c) the paralyzing of the bourgeoisie (it will become very weak) and the establishment of the hegemony of the proletariat (with decisive power); and (d) rapid progress toward a proletarian revolution.

The “Appeal” acknowledged that the Communist Party had “only recently begun to move in the direction of becoming a genuine vanguard party of the working class.” It pointed out the need to reorganize the party on the basis of the following policies:

1. The party must arm itself politically, tactically, and organizationally with Marxism . . . and in accordance with the policies of the Comintern. . . .

2. Party members . . . must constitute a union of all those who accept the policies of the Comintern as well as the constitution and platform of the Japanese Communist Party; must work actively and with confidence and loyalty as an element of the party organization; and must willingly obey party discipline and pay regular membership fees.

3. The party must be organized on the basis of cells in factories—the roots from which the party absorbs the demands of the masses and works for them.

4. The organizational principle of the party must be democratic centralization. Leadership for liaison between cells in factories and higher-level groups must be secured through elections. . . .

5. The party must have an illegal arm because of its relationship to the ruling classes. . . . But generally the policies and activities of the party will be set forth openly before the masses.

6. The party must stand at the head of all assemblies and demonstrations for mass struggles.
7. The party must organize fractions within all mass organizations.

The party leaders were determined to improve their position in the labor movement. Following the guidelines of the 1927 theses, they formulated a policy designed to establish the proper relationship between the party and the labor movement and to stimulate unification of that movement.⁷ In the new policy the leaders were critical of two tendencies in the party: the tendency to confuse labor unions with political parties, with the result that the party “forced” its tasks upon unions, and the tendency to underestimate the importance of the union movement, causing the party to lose its leadership role and alienate itself from the unions. They insisted that unions were independent organizations of the working masses, formed to fight for the workers’ everyday demands, and were not to be openly connected to a political party: “Efforts should be made to intensify these struggles rather than to link them immediately with a political struggle, thereby overestimating public support and disregarding the extent to which the masses have grown in their class consciousness and ability to organize.” Accordingly, the Communist Party should not give orders directly to labor unions but instead should try to influence them through fractions. “Unions will have political views of their own, resulting from their experience in day-to-day economic struggles and the influence of fractions; and they will grow revolutionary as the party’s influence increases.” This was spelled out clearly in the new policy:

The party and members must never underestimate the significance of the day-to-day struggles of labor unions against capital. They must participate in those struggles more actively than anyone else, be in the forefront of every fight, win the confidence of the masses through bold action and correct tactics, teach the masses revolutionary doctrines, lead them by example to criticize opportunistic leaders, and by these methods make the masses into a vast reinforcing army for the Communist Party in its political struggle. Such persistent and constant efforts, together with an accurate assessment of objective conditions, will enable the party to lead masses of unionists to rise in “political strike.” But without these efforts, the party should not force or indiscriminately use a political strike.

The party expressed concern about the weakness of the labor movement as a whole and the movement’s tendency to split because of differences in the political views of union leaders. The communists regarded “the fight for the unity of labor unions” as one of their most

important tasks. They emphasized the need to develop joint struggles, with left-wing unions aiding the strikes of right-wing and centrist unions; at the same time, they warned of the danger of opportunism taking root and spreading in labor unions. They pointed out that struggles against the rationalization of industry would be increasingly important and that consequently "emphasis must be shifted from regional struggles to those by a national industrial union." This meant that Hyogikai had to be strengthened as a national union, with a stronger base in the large factories of key industries. Finally, they called for a campaign to bring the labor union movement closer to the Profintern.

The communist leaders also sought to clarify the position of the party with regard to the peasant movement. They appealed to party members to assist in the day-to-day struggles of impoverished peasants "no matter what motives they may have in demanding reforms," and "to support the maximum peasant program calling for confiscation of large landholdings and distribution of land to cultivators." As in the case of the labor movement, the party leaders emphasized the need for unification of all peasant unions.⁸ On the whole, however, communist influence was confined to the Japan Peasant Union.

The Japanese communists made a special effort to define the party's relationship to the Labor-Farmer Party and to the Japan Labor-Farmer Party. They asserted that the Labor-Farmer Party was "an elementary organization of workers and peasants" that did not constitute a party of the working class in a strict sense:

It is a spontaneously developed political bloc that is fundamentally different from the Communist Party. . . . The Communist Party has been fundamentally wrong in its approach to the Labor-Farmer Party in that it has tried to give the latter the character of a proletarian class party and to transform it into the guiding party of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, thereby causing the vanguard party to be absorbed into the Labor-Farmer Party. The tendency to justify the existing division between the Labor-Farmer Party and the Japan Labor-Farmer Party stems from this error. It must be Communist Party tactics to work for the unification of the two parties. The Communist Party must form and expand fractions in both, and at the same time fight against all tendencies toward opportunism . . . by focusing upon concrete problems.⁹

In keeping with the 1927 theses, the communist leaders attempted to add a new dimension to their strategy and tactics by highlighting international matters:

As for all important problems of the international proletariat (especially the confrontation of the Soviet Union and the anti-Soviet alliance) and the revolutionary nationalistic movements of colonies and semicolonies, the party must treat them in its propaganda and agitation as political problems of the Japanese proletariat and provide a center for maintaining contact with foreign proletarian and nationalist movements. . . .

The greatest international problem for the Communist Party is to organize an effective struggle against the war of imperialism. . . . Another important problem, especially at the present time, is to give positive support to the Chinese revolutionary movement, to defend the Soviet Union, and to maintain contact and support the revolutionary movements in the colonies.¹⁰

ACTIVITIES ON THE THEORETICAL FRONT

Party leaders also felt a need to revitalize the "theoretical front" among intellectuals. They realized that their position with regard to Fukumotoism was still awkward, especially in view of the Comintern's criticism; even more important, they could hardly ignore the attacks of the Ronoha.

Sano Manabu wrote in *Marxism* in January 1928 that the new theses constituted not only a criticism of Fukumoto's theories and of tendencies in the party based on them, but also a general, historical criticism of the Japanese socialist movement as a whole. He urged that communists respond to the theses in several ways.* First, they should engage in self-criticism based upon the theses. "True self-criticism can be achieved only through practice and struggles," Sano pointed out. "Socialism means not words but action. . . . Only the left-wing elements that have been consistently activists can achieve true self-criticism." Second, said Sano, the communists should build on the achievements they had made so far; they should not underestimate all their past efforts. Third, they should correctly analyze objective conditions "in order to get an accurate view of the historical process." Only in this way could they find the basis for strategy and tactics. Fourth, they should correctly analyze the nature and role of mass political parties and mass organizations. Finally, they should give careful consideration to maintaining their own independence and to settling the question of their relationship with the masses—"not opportunistically but in the Marxist-Leninist fashion."¹¹

* It should be reiterated that the full translation of the theses had not yet been published. As previously noted, the first translation appeared in the February issue of *Social Thought*, and the official communist translation was appended to the March issue of *Marxism*.

Fukumoto was also criticized by Watanabe, especially his predilection for “idealistic” discussion. In an article appearing in *Marxism* in February, Watanabe wrote:

Today it is evident that Fukumoto's theory is a fallacious one. . . . The theory of eclecticism [Yamakawaism] was one of spontaneity and of formulas and translations. It was not something that could be translated into action by the masses. It was mere textbook theory. Thus, it was clear that it could not be of any use to the vanguard elements. It was only natural that they wanted a genuine class theory, a guiding theory to replace that of the eclecticists. Fukumoto's theory was accepted for that purpose. . . . His theory is built on the assumption that Japanese capitalism, though late to develop, is rapidly declining along with world capitalism. In his theory, he used a series of phrases that he translated from Lenin's brilliant work *What Is To Be Done*. These phrases are correct, but to cite an array of them regardless of the time and conditions is, in itself, no better than eclecticism. Therefore, his theory is a textbook theory just as eclecticism is.¹²

Shortly thereafter, Fukumoto himself acknowledged that he had discarded his false assumptions and theories. In a long article in the March 1928 issue of *Marxism*, he renounced his view of a declining Japanese capitalism and admitted his error in emphasizing the need for “theoretical struggle” instead of the need to establish an independent, leadership position for the communist vanguard. Moreover, he joined the party's attack on those leftists—especially the members of the Ronoha—who were using their interpretations of the new theses to increase their criticism of communist leadership.¹³

Watanabe led his colleagues in the refutation of the theoretical views of the Ronoha; in the January issue of *Marxism*, he countered arguments expressed in *Labor-Farmer* by Yamakawa and Inomata.* Watanabe branded as completely erroneous their contention that political power rested in the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie. In his words, “The highly developed capitalism of imperialist Japan still includes noncapitalist elements, e.g., the feudal system of exploitation in farm villages—the exploitation of tenant farmers by landlords.” He asserted that political expression of these feudal remnants

* Watanabe still referred to Yamakawa as a “comrade” and “party elder,” and appeared apologetic for using “very impolite language.” He commented, “Despite the differences in our views today, I can never forget the direction I received from Mr. Yamakawa and my respect for him. Such feelings may well be shared by all the workers of the left wing. Arguments based on different views are not made to drive away a comrade because of ‘theoretical struggles.’ However, when a difference in fundamental views is presented to the masses, we must convince them fully” (Watanabe Masanosuke, “Ippan Senryaku”).

was strongly reflected in the structure of the Japanese state. In brief, the argument Watanabe used to refute the Ronoha position was simply the basic conclusion of the 1927 theses that political power in Japan "lies in the hands of the bloc of capitalists and landlords in which the bourgeoisie holds hegemony." In his view, the immediate objective of the revolutionary struggle was therefore to eliminate landlordism and its political expression in the state structure. He insisted that "the revolution must pass through a bourgeois-democratic stage in order to give land to the tenant farmers and political freedom to the masses. Without this process, capitalism cannot be destroyed."

According to Watanabe, Yamakawa and Inomata erred because they overlooked the fact that the Meiji Restoration "could not settle the basic question in the social structure of feudalism—the land question." They wrongly concluded that the Meiji Restoration was in essence a bourgeois revolution with full political power passing into the hands of the bourgeoisie after a transitional period of clan government. This led them to ignore the significance of landlordism. They also erred in believing that landlords had become capitalists. According to Watanabe, landlords were not capitalists even if they invested land rents in banks or industry; their economic foundation was, after all, a feudal type of exploitation of the peasantry. "The relationship between landlord and tenant still exists; consequently, feudal political remnants still exist as powerful elements in our state." Watanabe insisted therefore that the peasantry under proletarian leadership had an important role to play in the revolutionary process.

Watanabe posed the following question to the party's critics: "How can the proletariat carry out a proletarian revolution without political freedom, without revolutionary military power, without the strong leadership of a vanguard party?" His answer was that it could not. "To achieve the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and to further realize the proletarian revolution, the overthrow of the imperial system is an unavoidable necessity. Unless the imperial system is overthrown, one cannot talk of bourgeois democracy in Japan." However, in concluding his article, he stated that the bourgeois-democratic revolution would quickly grow into a proletarian revolution.¹⁴

The attack on the Ronoha was continued by Sano.¹⁵ He criticized the members of the Ronoha, especially Yamakawa and his followers, on four counts: their unwillingness to admit the primary importance of politics, or their "economic" interpretation of politics; their "formalism," which he defined as "failure to present concrete, practical

policies when faced with situations of class struggle—financial panics, mass movements in villages, and prefectural elections”; their “pacifism,” or “aim to exclude militant elements in an effort to unite the less class-conscious masses”; and their “opportunism,” or “waiting for a vanguard to emerge spontaneously from the mass parties.” He reiterated the Comintern criticisms of “the lack of independence of those vanguard elements who have been satisfied with advocating their own policies through left-wing mass organizations regardless of their independence,” and of “the danger arising from excessive leadership of intellectual elements in the proletarian movement.”

Sano went on to analyze the causes of these errors. He noted that the fundamental mistake in the Ronoha theory of strategy was to ignore “the historical necessity of the struggle for bourgeois democracy.” He followed Watanabe’s interpretation of the Meiji Restoration and amplified it. According to Sano, the restoration simply transferred the control of a typically feudal means of exploitation of the peasants from the *daimyo* to the landlords. The feudal relationship based upon payment of rent in kind had essentially been preserved, and was reflected in politics, where “absolutism,” as a political force centered in the Privy Council, the House of Peers, and the military clique, represented the landlords primarily. Sano admitted that the capitalists were predominant in the bloc comprising the bourgeoisie and the landlords, but like Watanabe he insisted that the continued existence of the landlords necessitated a “decisive struggle for bourgeois democracy” by the workers and peasants. In conclusion, he wrote:

The Ronoha is denying the truth of the historical necessity of a bourgeois-democratic revolution occurring in Japan. The Ronoha loses sight of the position and role of the landlords in Japanese political and economic relationships. It explains the land problem in theoretical terms, and because it overlooks the historical significance of the land problem, it cannot correctly evaluate the position of the peasantry. Consequently, it does not show the need for an alliance of the proletariat and peasants.

Sano was not as consistent in his analysis as Watanabe, however; at times, his line of argument came close to that of the Ronoha. He evidently wanted to avoid discussion of a need for a direct attack on the imperial system. Therefore, he tended to make the imperialist bourgeoisie the main object of the struggle in both stages of revolution, though, in his words, “the first stage would not be a pure anti-im-

perialist struggle." He was later criticized by the party for not supporting the slogan "Abolish the Imperial System."

The Communist Party-Ronoha controversies continued throughout 1928. On the Ronoha side, Inomata was the key figure, contributing mainly to *Labor-Farmer* and *Central Review*, whereas Watanabe, writing in *Marxism*, was the leading spokesman for the party. Joined by Nabeyama, Ichikawa Shoichi, Murayama, and others, Watanabe attacked both the social democrats in defense of the 1927 theses and the members of the Ronoha for their interpretation of the theses, particularly Inomata, who remained convinced that the theses supported his arguments for a proletarian revolution instead of a bourgeois-democratic one. Later, especially after a police crackdown on the party in March 1928, publication of *Marxism* became increasingly difficult. It was not completely halted, however, and articles by party leaders continued to appear until full-scale publication got under way again in December.

THE NATIONAL ELECTION

The most immediate political concern of the Japanese Communist Party was the national election scheduled for February 20, 1928, the first to be held under the Universal Manhood Suffrage Law.¹⁶ The party saw in the election campaign an opportunity to reach all mass organizations, as well as unorganized workers and poor peasants, in order to raise their level of political consciousness; to achieve a merger of the various left-wing political parties, as well as the labor unions and other badly split mass organizations, reserving the right, however, "to criticize freely the social democratic and opportunistic leaders of those bodies"*; and to gain a foothold in the lower house of the Diet in order to use the legality of that institution as a tool in the mass struggle against the feudal remnants and the bourgeoisie.

However, the Communist Party made clear its view that the election and parliamentary activity were not in the mainstream of the struggle. The communists regarded the election as part of a larger mass struggle that was theoretically bound to develop into an armed insurrection, especially if the Seiyukai could be prevented from winning an

* Wrote Watanabe: "Where the Communist Party is forced to be illegal and where the people are deprived of all liberties, the suppressed people have to form a broad alliance in order to seize power." He insisted that though the Communist Party did not oppose a merger including social democrats, it would resolutely fight social democratic tendencies (*Sekki* [February 15, 1928], I, 12).

absolute majority, thus causing a dissolution of the Diet and increasing political confusion. The aim of the struggle at this stage was the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of a democratic government of workers and peasants. This meant that the Diet, representing landlord and bourgeois interests, was an instrument of the enemy class and had to be destroyed. The Communist Party, while participating in the parliamentary system, would expose the class character of that system, destroy it from within, and finally build a new soviet system. The party opposed what it called "the social democratic delusion" that the Diet would provide any substantial reform for the workers and peasants, and feared that the masses, who were taking part in a national election for the first time, would share this delusion. Holding that the party had to win the masses over from the social democrats by representing "their narrow, specific, immediate interests," the communists announced that their policies were: abolition of the monarchy; achievement of a democratic government of workers and peasants; universal suffrage and extension of the right to hold office to everyone over eighteen; freedom of speech, press, assembly, and association; abolition of all antilabor laws; the right to organize, strike, and demonstrate; enactment of an unemployment allowance law; confiscation of large landholdings; establishment of a progressive income tax and an inheritance tax; opposition to imperialist war; defense of the Soviet Union; and complete independence for colonies.¹⁷

This platform made it practically impossible for the communists to work for a merger of all the mass parties or even for one between the Labor-Farmer Party and the Japan Labor-Farmer Party. If the objective was to achieve the creation of a broadly based popular party, the situation required some kind of program of minimum demands acceptable to all—not a maximum program including the demand for a government of workers and peasants in place of the existing imperial system. The Communist Party position suffered from its leaders' conviction that their party was the only political party of the working class and that the Labor-Farmer, Japan Labor-Farmer, and Social Democratic parties were political parties in name only because they had no clear class program, lacked discipline, represented the interests of suppressed people in a disorganized manner, and included a variety of elements. The communists thought that a merger was conditional upon acceptance of their leadership and approval of a government of workers and peasants—a government that could not be achieved without armed insurrection or civil war. This position was

hardly realistic in view of the weakness of communist fractions in the legal parties and other mass organizations. Watanabe wrote in the February 15 issue of *Red Flag*: "The Communist Party must penetrate into the masses of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party and the Social Democratic Party in order to form fractions, and must clarify the tasks of the Labor-Farmer Party in order to increase its left-wing orientation and build up the power of the party among the masses, in opposition to the social democrats."¹⁸ These points continued to be emphasized after the election.¹⁹ (Much of this discussion was clearly highly academic: there was a personal animosity between the leaders of the Communist Party and its fraction in the Labor-Farmer Party on one side and the leaders of the Japan Labor-Farmer and Social Democratic parties on the other that made the achievement of such a goal virtually impossible. For example, during the election campaign, the communists attacked the leaders of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party—especially Aso, for his praise of former Prime Minister Hara Takashi—and those of the Social Democratic Party—especially Akamatsu, for his "approval of the policies of the Labor-Farmer Party in order to get elected.")²⁰

In general, communist influence was strong only in the Labor-Farmer Party; in fact 11 communists ran for the Diet as Labor-Farmer Party candidates. They were: Karasawa Seihachi (Tokyo 4th District); Akiwa Matsugoro (Tokyo 5th District); Minami Kiichi (Tokyo 6th District); Noda Ritsuta (Osaka 1st District); Namba Hideo (Kikuchi Katsumi) (Okayama 2nd District); Yamamoto (Hokkaido 1st District); Tokuda (Fukuoka 4th District); Sugiura (Shizuoka 1st District); Chikauchi Konnai (Kobe 2nd District); Kiyohara Kazutaka, alias Saiko Mankichi, (Nara); and Inokuchi Masao (Okinawa). The central executive committee of the Communist Party instructed these men to campaign throughout the country as Labor-Farmer Party members, and at the same time to distribute handbills in the name of the Communist Party.

Communist Party tactics in the election campaign were consistent with advice offered by the Comintern. In the February 2 issue of the *International Press Correspondence*, Katayama wrote:

Owing to the severe administrative restrictions, the Communist Party cannot put forward its own candidates to the extent that its influence upon the masses of the proletariat warrants. Therefore, the party must advocate voting for the candidates of the Labor-Farmer Party, which enters the struggle with the genuine purpose of defending the interests of the toilers. Simultaneously, however, the Communist Party must participate in the

election campaign in its own right, issue its own manifesto, set up its own platform along the lines already publicized in the press, put up its own speakers, etc. While in general supporting the candidates of the kindred Labor-Farmer Party, the Communist Party must strive to surmount the obstacles that stand in its way and, at least in a few proletarian constituencies, put forward its own candidates, if at all possible.

Katayama called upon the party to attack its enemies, the "servile Social Democrats and reformists," to whom "the bourgeoisie has allocated . . . the principal task of discouraging the revolutionary strivings of the masses and of strengthening constitutional illusions." He also urged the party to seek to strengthen the anti-imperialist position of the Labor-Farmer Party by persuading it to include in its platform such slogans as "Support of the Chinese Revolution," "Demand for Withdrawal of Japanese Troops from China," "Complete Independence of the Colonies," and "Defense of the Soviet Union, Which Is the Most Loyal Friend of All the Exploited and the Oppressed." Finally, he touched briefly upon the need for unity in the labor and political movements:

Our party must make full use of the elections to explain to the masses of the workers the necessity for trade union unity and to point out to them how this can be achieved. At the same time, the party must continue to struggle for the amalgamation of the Labor-Farmer Party with the Japan Labor-Farmer Party, and to put an end to the split, for which the leaders alone are responsible. Obviously the struggle for amalgamation can be conducted only on the basis of a consistent class platform and a fight against reformism, relying upon the support of the rank and file and local organizations of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party.²¹

The showing of the left-wing parties in the election was dismal. Their total vote was only about 5 per cent of all ballots cast. The election was a "victory" for the "bourgeois and landlord parties," with the Seiyukai returning 219 candidates on the basis of 4,274,898 votes and the Minseito 217, with 4,201,219 votes. General Tanaka, leader of the Seiyukai and prime minister, retained his office, but his party's position in the Diet was precarious. None of the communist candidates were returned. Of the Labor-Farmer Party's 40 candidates, who amassed a total of 188,141 votes, only two were successful. Nineteen Social Democrats ran, garnering 128,908 votes; four were elected. The Japan Labor-Farmer Party, which received 93,400 votes, returned only one candidate out of 14. The ten candidates of the Japan Farmer Party were shut out completely, winning only 36,491 votes, and only

one candidate of seven put up by local "proletarian" parties won a Diet seat.²²

The election results were not surprising. The appeal of the left-wing parties was limited largely to workers and tenant farmers who were organized—some 660,000 eligible voters in a total electorate of over 14 million. Moreover, the left-wing parties were hampered by the age qualification for voting, which had been set at twenty-five. Unless they were to broaden their appeal to include other classes and groups, they could not expect to do much better in subsequent elections, and in fact would have to compete with the major parties for the organized labor-peasant vote.²³

After the election, Watanabe, Sano Manabu, and the local committee chairmen—Kasuga, Mitamura, Kawai, Fujii, and Nakao—met to review the party's record since the reorganization in December. They not only reaffirmed the campaign emphasis upon the slogans "Government of Workers and Peasants" and "Democratic and Revolutionary Dictatorship of Workers and Peasants," but passed a resolution declaring that a merger of mass parties would be achieved only by struggles centering around these slogans. In their view, it was the party's task to relate the everyday demands of the workers and peasants to the party's slogans. They also reaffirmed their opposition to the social democrats, "who gave themselves away in the election campaign." They agreed upon the need to eliminate the remnants of factionalism in their efforts to increase party membership, and the importance of using publications, especially the various party and factory newspapers, in order to popularize the party. Finally, they decided that priority should continue to be given to "winning over factories, especially large factories." On the whole, they were optimistic, largely because of an increase in party membership, which totaled approximately 500 by the end of the election campaign.

According to Ichikawa, the group also passed a resolution branding the members of the Ronoha as class traitors and expelling them from the party.* The party made a special effort to clarify its position on the Ronoha publicly. In the March 1 issue of *Red Flag*, the central execu-

* Our only source for the decisions taken at this meeting is Ichikawa (*Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 126-27). As already noted, Arahata states that he had refused to rejoin the party. Yamakawa flatly denies that he was expelled from the party, since he "had not been in the party from the first." He adds, "Although it is hard to understand why the Communist Party wanted to create such a myth, I can guess why. They either wanted to damage or debase others, or they wanted to make their history consistent because they had reported to the Comintern that both Sakai and Yamakawa had remained in the party" (Yamakawa, *Shakaishugi e*, p. 210).

tive committee denounced the Ronoha, "which pretending to stand for communism, has been preventing our party from reorganizing. We stand firmly against them—the dissolutionists and opportunists, the worst enemies of the working class, and the agents of the bourgeoisie and social democrats." The committee attempted to make it absolutely clear that the Ronoha was not a faction of the party:

The group around the magazine *Labor-Farmer* may consider themselves communists. But what is the indispensable condition for being a communist? It is, as one member of the group, Mr. Arahata, stated during the trial of the communist case, to belong to the party and constantly engage in its organizational activities. The communist does not confine himself to writing for a magazine or to study. . . . There cannot be a communist who does not belong to the Communist Party.

To counter Ronoha criticism that the Communist Party was simply one "privately-owned" group within the communist movement, the central executive committee insisted that only the party was "the instrument of the working class." It issued a challenge to the Ronoha members: "If you wish to join the party, why don't you follow party policies and put them into practice?" The committee also countered the claim that the Ronoha strategy of revolution was endorsed by the Comintern: "Would the Comintern tolerate those who would not organize a party or those who would not join in its activities? The answer is 'no'."²⁴

SUPPRESSION OF THE PARTY

Even before the Communist Party went "public," the authorities, reinforced with Special Thought Police and armed with the Peace Preservation Law, had begun to gather information about it. For several months they had been receiving reports about attempts to form a second party.* By February 1927 the Tokyo and Osaka police had information regarding the inaugural meeting held in December 1926 at "a hot spring known for heavy snowfall and pregnancy-inducing waters."²⁵ They soon had detailed knowledge of meetings and party members; a number of the communists had made little or no effort to

* According to an unconfirmed account, the authorities got their information regarding the reorganized party from a labor union leader who, after unsuccessfully attempting to sell information to the Special Thought Police of the Metropolitan Police Board, found an official of the labor section who was interested enough to buy. The official, Mori Motoi, later became chief of the Special Thought Police (Yamamoto and Arita, p. 153).

hide their affiliation. During the election campaign, the police got possession of a number of communist handbills and pamphlets, thousands of which had been printed and distributed.

Satisfied that they had sufficient evidence to act against the party under the Peace Preservation Law, the authorities prepared to carry out a nationwide roundup of suspected party members. Several thousand policemen went into action on the morning of March 15, 1928, raiding a large number of residences and the offices of some 50 left-wing organizations, including the central offices of the Labor-Farmer Party, the All-Japan Proletarian Youth League, Hyogikai, and the Japan Peasant Union, as well as the editorial offices of *The Proletarian News*. The police arrested over 1,200 persons; approximately 700 were interrogated, and over 500 were ultimately indicted. The police also confiscated thousands of documents, including a list of Communist Party members. The government imposed a tight censorship on the press that remained in force until April 10.

Despite careful police planning, such key figures as Watanabe, Sano Manabu, Ichikawa, Mitamura, Nakao, Nabeyama, Kokuryo, and Fukumoto escaped the dragnet.* Sano had departed for Shanghai on the evening of March 14 on his way to Moscow to attend the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, scheduled to convene in July. He was joined later in Moscow by Ichikawa, Yamamoto Kenzo (who was released by the police because of poor health), Maniwa (who had fled to Vladivostok in March 1926 where he had been working at a seamen's club), and Namba Hideo (who fled to the Soviet Union without party authorization). Kokuryo had left for Moscow earlier to attend the Profintern Congress, scheduled from March 17 to April 3. (Hyogikai was formally admitted as the Japanese branch of the Profintern at this congress.) The other communists who escaped the police dragnet went into hiding.

The police continued their search, and made arrest after arrest in the following months. Nakao and Mizuno were caught on April 8, Murayama on June 27, Fukumoto on June 28, and Kawai Etsuzo and Iwata Yoshimichi on August 4. With the exception of Arahata, the members of the Ronoha were not marked for arrest. He was apprehended in mid-June and held until March 1929.²⁶ He was ultimately sentenced to two years in prison, but the sentence was suspended be-

* There is no evidence that they knew about the plans of the police. However, Tokuda had been arrested on February 26, and they may have anticipated some kind of blow against the party.

cause the court decided that his membership in the former communist bureau did not constitute membership in the Communist Party.

The Communist Party continued to maintain contact with Comintern agents at Shanghai. Sano, after his arrival there, wrote to Watanabe at a prearranged Tokyo address asking for a report on the arrests. At the end of March, Watanabe sent Iwata to Shanghai to make such a report. Iwata received instructions from Sano and Janson to reorganize the party and have it initiate a mass movement to protest the arrests and agitate for the release of the prisoners. Sano and Janson also urged the party not to halt publication of *Red Flag* and *The Proletarian News*. After Iwata's return to Japan on April 5, Watanabe joined with Nabeyama and Mitamura to form a provisional central executive committee to carry out the Comintern instructions.²⁷ The party remnants also organized a Liberation Movement Victims Relief Association to extend aid to the arrested and to work to get them released. (With the continuation of arrests in subsequent years, party elements formed the Red Aid Association; it attempted to operate legally, but was forced underground in 1931.)

The crippled party leadership managed to continue publishing *Red Flag*. In an issue dated March 22, the "party" protested the government action and boasted of its continued existence: "The Japanese Communist Party is alive and well. The Japanese Communist Party of today will never collapse because of arrests. The Communist Party will march more bravely and conscientiously than ever at the head of all mass actions, with the red flag held high." According to *Red Flag*, the authorities wanted to crush the party in order to prevent an "unconditional" merger of the left-wing parties that would destroy the influence of the social democrats. "Only the ruling classes and their agents the social democrats are pleased with the arrests, for they wish to secure their rule over the masses by suppressing the Japanese Communist Party." *Red Flag* made it clear that if violence was the weapon of the party's enemies, then violence was to be used against them as well: "The working class and the masses of peasants cannot progress in the world as long as they rely only on speech and the press. Whatever the sacrifice, there is no means other than violence. We cannot indefinitely endure violence from the ruling class. We must defend ourselves. Let us stir up mass action in the factories and farm villages for a movement to release those arrested."²⁸

The authorities were hardly intimidated by party pronouncements. On April 10 they moved again, this time banning the Labor-Farmer

Party, the All-Japan Proletarian Youth League, and Hyogikai, on the ground that their existence endangered the foundations of the state. However, if not intimidated, the authorities were deeply concerned about the situation. On the following day the news ban was removed and Prime Minister Tanaka addressed the nation, saying:

I am horrified by the Communist Party's activities, in view of the spirit of our national polity and the moral relationship between ruler and subjects. . . . The [communists] would fundamentally change the national polity, unbroken through the ages, and establish a dictatorial government of the labor-farmer classes, which would have as basic policies the protection of the Soviet Union and the granting of complete independence to colonies. Their ultimate goal is the realization of a communist society; for the present, they are working for revolution. They have printed and distributed unspeakable assertions regarding the government—diabolical acts beyond description, which neither heaven nor man can permit.²⁹

Official after official and many opinion makers heaped abuse upon the communists. For example, *Asahi Shinbun* commented on April 11:

The Communist Party of Japan, as the Japanese branch of the revolutionary proletarian world party—the Third International—is luring our empire into the whirlpool of world revolution. It strives to change fundamentally the perfect, unblemished character of our nation and to establish a dictatorship of workers and peasants. . . . The doctrine and program of the Japanese Communist Party strike at the very foundation of our nation, constituting a capital crime that cannot be tolerated, under any circumstances.³⁰

Some officials did more than simply alarm the people. The procurator-general asked challenging, fundamental questions regarding the increase in party strength, especially its “great number of serious-minded elements.” He was quoted in *Nichi Nichi Shinbun* as follows: “If such a type of thought is spreading, . . . is there not some defect in social organization involved? That is my belief. No matter how the [Peace Preservation] law is revised, we cannot expect to check [such thought] unless we eliminate the defect. This is more important, I suppose, than to accuse those who have been arrested.”³¹

The authorities extended their suppression to the universities. On April 17, they ordered the dissolution of Tokyo Imperial University's influential New Men Society, and shortly thereafter of the various social science associations at the imperial universities in Kyoto, Sendai, and Fukuoka. They forced the resignation of a number of leftist pro-

fessors, including Kawakami Hajime, of Kyoto University, and three young Ronoha theorists at Kyushu University. A few months later, the government imposed tighter controls on campuses; it added "student supervisors" to the staffs of state universities and colleges to prevent the revival of undesirable organizations and to "guide" student thinking.³²

CONSEQUENCES OF THE GOVERNMENT ACTION

Leaders of the various noncommunist left-wing parties and groups were quick to express their opinions about the situation. All of them opposed the banning of the Labor-Farmer Party and attacked the Peace Preservation Law. However, most of them, like Aso of the centrist Japan Labor-Farmer Party, took it for granted that since the Communist Party was an illegal party, its members risked arrest in violation of that law.³³ Clearly, many of them tacitly approved the suppression of the communists, probably because they saw greater possibilities for a merger of the legal parties once communist "sectarian" influence was removed from the scene. The reaction of the labor leaders was similar. Within Sodomei, some of the younger leaders began to move toward establishing a General Federation of Labor, now that communist elements could be excluded. Yamakawa asserted that "the major reason the government banned the Labor-Farmer Party was the fact that the key machinery of the party was in the hands of the Communist Party. . . . The arrests eliminated the most important reason for banning the Labor-Farmer Party." Yamakawa seems to have anticipated a "sound" development of the proletarian movement with the removal of the major obstacle of Communist Party influence.³⁴ Oyama Ikuo, the chairman of the banned party, took a very different position on the issue of communist influence, however. He argued:

The authorities seem to have held the view that the policies and platform of the Labor-Farmer Party had much in common with those of the Japanese Communist Party. However, we maintain that the question should not be one of whether or not we had anything in common with the Communist Party, but rather of whether or not our platform and policies themselves exceeded the permissible limits. And I can say with complete responsibility that the platform and policies were not beyond such limits, but fell far short of them.³⁵

Until the Labor-Farmer Party was banned, it remained under the influence of the communists. During a discussion of the need for the

parties to merge at an "Extensive Conference of the Executive Committee of the Labor-Farmer Party" on March 26 and 27, a Ronoha minority, which opposed the party leadership, moved that the party renounce the idea of a government of workers and peasants as infeasible within the framework of capitalism and concentrate on "the elimination of past errors, instead of insisting on the freedom to criticize social democracy." The majority rejected the motion and answered: "We must fight to the end against social democrats who advocate a merger for compromise [with the capitalists and landlords]. All efforts should be directed to developing stronger joint struggles of the masses. The central slogan of joint struggles is 'Overthrow the government of capitalists and landlords and form a government of workers and peasants.' We must have the freedom to criticize social democrats everywhere."³⁶

The government added other weapons of intimidation. Despite the opposition of the left-wing parties and allied organizations in the labor and peasant movements, as well as the reluctance of the Diet, the cabinet had the emperor issue an emergency imperial edict on June 29 revising the Peace Preservation Law. Under this edict, the courts were empowered to give the death sentence to anyone attempting to alter the national constitution, and to give prison terms up to ten years to anyone advocating abolition of private property. In July, the Home Ministry established a new peace preservation section and began to expand the Special Thought Police. The army, for its part, established "thought teams" in every military police unit.³⁷

The communists could hardly contribute much in the way of opposition to these actions. However, a party spokesman later claimed that they "took the lead in the struggle against the Peace Preservation Law . . . thus advancing the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants," and that "the social democrats, ranging from the Social Democratic Party and the Japan Labor-Farmer Party to the Ronoha, implicitly and explicitly refused to fight against the Peace Preservation Law."³⁸

Once the Labor-Farmer Party was banned, it became communist policy to help create a new Labor-Farmer Party and to continue to support the idea of its merger with the Japan Labor-Farmer Party. For example, on April 16 *The Proletarian News* appealed for the establishment of a council to rebuild the dissolved party and pave the way for a merger. Coincidentally, Labor-Farmer Party elements, including members of the Ronoha, formed an "Association for Rebuilding the

Labor-Farmer Party and Preparing for a New Party" (Ronoto Saiken Shinto Jumbikai). However, the association was immediately banned by the government and had to operate as an illegal body. When its members could not agree on the nature of the party, a Ronoha group of some 35 members, including Kuroda, Suzuki Mosaburo, Inamura Junzo and Okada, broke with the dominant faction headed by Chairman Oyama and Secretary-General Hososako and formed the Proletarian Masses Party (Musun Taishuto) in July. Yamakawa and Sakai served as "elder statesmen," or advisers, in the new party. The remaining members of the preparatory association continued to work for the reestablishment of the Labor-Farmer Party, and the communists supported them in order to fight against both "extreme left-wing factionalism" and "right-wing divisiveness." The opposing camps competed bitterly for the support of former Labor-Farmer Party members.

The communists struggled under extreme difficulties to maintain a strong position in the labor movement. The March 15 roundup had almost completely destroyed the organizational structure of Hyogikai. The three party leaders—Watanabe, Nabeyama, and Mitamura—planned to organize an industrial propaganda committee to rebuild Hyogikai on an industry basis,³⁹ but they were barely able to get under way before the government ordered Hyogikai to dissolve.* At this time Hyogikai represented 82 unions of some 23,000 members organized in 11 regional councils.⁴⁰ The arrests and dissolution order were a heavy blow because of the highly centralized nature of the organization. Hyogikai's entire structure was thrown into confusion. Most local unions were at a loss how to respond; some disbanded and others left the extreme left-wing camp. However, some were hopeful that Hyogikai would be reestablished, among them the Kanto Metal Workers Union which on April 15 appealed for the formation of a "General Council of Japanese Labor Unions" (Nihon Rodo Kumiai Sohyogikai). The union planned to hold a preparatory meeting for that purpose on April 22, but the government intervened and arrested the leaders. Under communist influence, the disappointed labor leaders decided to alter their tactics; they would begin first by creating district councils of industrial unions. (They were later to establish a national federation upon such a base.) A Kanto district council preparatory

* The metropolitan police could not find anyone at Hyogikai headquarters to receive the dissolution order. They finally had to summon the wife of Nakamura Yoshiaki, a communist member of Hyogikai's central committee who had been arrested in March, to accept the written order.

committee was formed on May 12, and a national council committee on September 8, but because of continuing police surveillance, these were little more than token moves.⁴¹

The March 15 arrests also struck hard at the communists in the peasant movement. With communist influence at a low point, the Japan Peasant Union decided in April 1928 to cooperate with the centrist All-Japan Peasant Union. A merger of the two was effected in May with the formation of the National Peasant Union (Zenkoku Nomin Kumiai), or Zenno, under the leadership of Sugiyama and Kagawa. The National Peasant Union generally took a center position on basic political issues. The rightist elements in the peasant movement were also able to develop a degree of unity. The All-Japan League of Peasant Unions joined four small organizations in July 1928 to form a new All-Japan Peasant Union (Zen Nihon Nomin Kumiai).⁴² The communists and the left were unable to make their influence felt in the peasant movement again until early in 1929.

COMINTERN REACTION

The Comintern was quick to react to the deteriorating situation in Japan. Katayama registered a protest against the arrests and the subsequent dissolution of the three mass organizations in *International Press Correspondence*.^{*} He tried to be optimistic: "The wholesale arrests of communists and leaders of the left organizations have not only failed to intimidate the masses, but have increased their fighting spirit. There is not the least doubt that the left organizations will increase their activity and mobilize great masses for the further struggle."⁴³ The executive committee of the Comintern began sending large numbers of Japanese attending the Eastern Workers Communist University, or Kutobe, back to Japan to help the Japanese party rebuild. In all, some 30 Kutobe trainees, including Soma Ichiro, who had helped Watanabe form the Nankatsu Labor Society, and Hakamada Satomi, who had helped organize Hyogikai, began the long trip across Siberia in April and May.⁴⁴

^{*} *International Press Correspondence* also published a protest of the Pan-Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat signed by Huang Pin and Earl Browder. It stated in part: "The international relations of the Japanese proletariat have not been destroyed, nor have the proletarian organizations in Japan been broken up. . . . We hope that not only the workers and peasants but all honest liberal and democratic elements in the Japanese nation will see the necessity of joining together to defend the prisoners, check the growing reaction, and consolidate democracy in the country (*Inprecorr*, VIII, May 17, 1928, 507-8).

On May 4 the political secretariat of the executive committee of the Comintern issued a "Resolution on the Immediate Tasks of the Communist Party of Japan."⁴⁵ In the resolution, the Comintern emphasized the need for the party to continue fighting social democracy: "In Japan, no less than in all other countries, notwithstanding the peculiar conditions of class development, a Communist Party can develop only through a struggle against social democracy." The Comintern then related this struggle to united front tactics:

The aim of the tactic of the united front is to mobilize the masses in the fight against capitalism and *reformism*, and thus to strengthen the revolutionary organizations of the working class. . . . The proposal of the Labor-Farmer Party to amalgamate with the centrist Japan Labor-Farmer Party was made on the assumption that this amalgamation campaign would be directed not only against the Social Democratic [Party] leaders, but also against the reformist leaders of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party itself. The proposal of the Japan Labor-Farmer Party to include the rightist Social Democratic Party in the amalgamation was made for the purpose of handing over the leadership to the worst elements of reformism. The [Communist] Party committed an error when it failed to oppose this proposal, and to expose before the workers belonging to the centrist and social democratic organizations this conspiracy of the social democratic leaders to isolate the Labor-Farmer Party.

The Comintern called upon the Communist Party to lead the struggles for the reestablishment of the Labor-Farmer Party, Hyogikai, and the All-Japan Proletarian Youth League. It singled out Hyogikai for special attention:

The transfer of the leftist members of this organization to the centrist unions would mean not only open capitulation on the part of the workers, but also would encourage the government in its terrorist policies and the reformist leaders in their treachery. Special steps should be taken to maintain all contacts, particularly those built up in the local trade union sections. The local unions of Hyogikai, while fighting for the reestablishment of their dissolved body, must do everything possible to prepare for the normal functioning of a centralized body uniting all the organizations of Hyogikai.

The party was also to work for unity within the labor movement. "While organizing the fight on behalf of Hyogikai, our party must use the onward march of the workers to mobilize them behind demands that will unite the whole labor union movement on the platform of class struggle under a militant leadership."

The Comintern encouraged the Communist Party to agitate among the workers in order to influence the conduct of Labor-Farmer Party tactics in the Diet and to rebuild that party into a strong revolutionary mass organization.* The "Resolution on Immediate Tasks" continued:

The Communist Party must explain to the workers that in view of the numerical weakness of the Labor-Farmer Party group in the Diet, the Labor-Farmer Party will be able to play an independent role only if its deputies wage an extensive struggle (with the support of the Communist Party and under the control of the broad masses) against imperialism, for the workers' and peasants' demands, and for the strengthening of the revolutionary organizations. No matter what the difficulties, the Labor-Farmer Party deputies must come out against the predatory war that Japanese imperialism is waging against China and force the reformist deputies either to join in the campaign or to expose themselves as open allies of the predatory government policy. Such a struggle can be carried on by the Labor-Farmer Party group . . . only if all parliamentary activity is based on an extra-parliamentary mass movement—on the participation in and leadership of the strike movement and parliamentary campaigns with the help of demonstrations, meetings, leaflets, press, etc. The main task of the deputies is to plunge themselves into the thick of this struggle. Only in this way can the Labor-Farmer Party make use of the limited opportunities of the parliamentary tribune—especially limited under the present circumstances—to develop the revolutionary movement and to draw into that movement those workers and peasants who are still under the influence of the reformist and bourgeois parties.

The campaign on behalf of the dissolved organizations, the Comintern pointed out, was to be directly linked with measures to strengthen the Communist Party itself:

The young Communist Party must strain every nerve to strengthen the party itself—both numerically and ideologically. Special stress should be laid on the strengthening and improvement of the *illegal apparatus* so as to counteract the measures of the government, which are calculated to destroy the Communist Party, as well as all revolutionary organizations, through police repression and legal persecution. The party should take measures to improve its apparatus and, at the same time, should miss no opportunity to use all legal means to establish contact with the masses in order to extend its ideological and organizational influence among the workers and poor peasants.

* After the dissolution of the Labor-Farmer Party, the cabinet tried to expel the party's members from the Diet. However, the cabinet had no legal basis on which to act, and could only put pressure on them through close police surveillance and intimidation.

The Comintern made a special effort to encourage the communists to struggle against the Tanaka cabinet's military moves in China, specifically the "Tsinan Incident." The Japanese army occupied Tsinan, in Shantung Province, at the end of April 1928, blocking the march north of Chiang Kai-shek and his troops to Peking. Fighting broke out between the Japanese and Chinese on May 3, and continued until the Kuomintang capitulated to Japanese demands for a stronger position in Shantung. The executive committee of the Comintern appealed to the people of Japan to resist the effort of the Japanese "imperialists" in China:

Workers, peasants and soldiers of Japan! It is your first revolutionary duty to stop the sword raised over the Chinese people. Reply to the violent capture of Shantung with an organized, self-sacrificing mass struggle against the Japanese government. Build, strengthen, and broaden your revolutionary organizations. Raise the banner of the Communist Party still higher. . . . Drive out the reformist traitors, who under cover of false promises and hypocritical phrases support the reactionaries at the decisive moment. Force the imperialists to listen to your demand that all forces be immediately withdrawn from China and the other colonies. Employ all means to prevent the dispatching of more troops and ammunition against the Chinese people. In exposing the nature of the new mercenary crusade, see to it that every soldier sent by the government to China becomes an enemy of imperialism, a loyal ally of the Chinese revolution, and a true fighter for the overthrow of capitalism in Japan.⁴⁶

The stakes were high, according to the Comintern, because "the attack on the Chinese people is a measure in the preparation of a gigantic and monstrous new world war." Declaring that "the division of China now begun by Japan is a step towards that war," the Comintern warned that "a world catastrophe is approaching with ever-greater velocity."

The Japanese Communist Party was active in opposing the dispatch of troops to China. It organized a League Against War, published handbills and pamphlets, and sponsored antiwar meetings.⁴⁷ However, it was hardly able to serve as a disruptive force in Japan. It had once again been decimated through arrests and had lost operational fronts through the dissolution of the Labor-Farmer Party, the All-Japan Proletarian Youth League, and Hyogikai. The party organization was pitifully weak at a time when the Comintern and its Russian leaders sought to mobilize all the opposition they possibly could against the Japanese state and the resurgence of Japanese imperialism.

Reorganization and Defections, 1928-1930

The Sixth Comintern Congress, held at Moscow between July 17 and September 1, 1928, provided an opportunity for the Japanese delegates to consider the position of their party, both from the standpoint of conditions in Japan as well as in relation to the state of the international communist movement. Over 500 delegates from 55 parties attended the congress; the theses and resolutions they adopted were to provide the basis for the policies of international communism until the summer of 1935, when the Seventh Congress adopted the strategy of the popular front. Trotsky was no longer on the scene, and this meeting was the last presided over by Bukharin. The Sixth Congress constituted a landmark in the development of policy for communist parties throughout the world in that it established the so-called Stalin-Bukharin line, a swing to the left in international policy.

The theses on "The International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist International" that were approved by the congress proclaimed the beginning of a new, third period in the postwar development of capitalism. The distinguishing feature of the new period, according to the theses, was the disintegration of the temporary and partial stabilization achieved by world capitalism since 1924—a change that had important implications for communist strategy and tactics. The theses predicted a new round of wars and revolutions. In the words of one historian, "The contradictions within capitalism . . . were to become immeasurably intensified during the third period. Increased production was to lead to an unprecedentedly desperate struggle for markets, during which the capitalist states were to resort to violence against each other, against the 'toiling masses,' and against the Soviet Union."¹ Communist parties throughout the world were alerted to take the offensive.

A Comintern program approved by the congress outlined four broad types of societies in which the world revolutionary process was to unfold: (1) highly developed or advanced capitalist societies; (2) societies of medium capitalist development; (3) backward semicolonial

or colonial societies; and (4) primitive societies. The program described the kind of revolution that was appropriate for each type of society.

The program classified Japan as a society of medium capitalist development, a category for which there were two possible strategies of revolution. In one case, such a society might not be sufficiently developed economically and politically to permit an immediate advance toward socialism; therefore, there would first have to be a bourgeois-democratic revolution, which would then "grow over" into a socialist revolution. The other possibility was that such a society might be sufficiently advanced to permit a revolution that would be proletarian from the outset, though a number of bourgeois-democratic tasks would have to be carried out in the process. Despite Japan's considerable industrial development, according to the Comintern program she was not destined to have a proletarian revolution. The Comintern continued to hold the view that the chief characteristics of Japan were her semifeudal system of agriculture and her peculiar political regime headed by a monarchy representing the interests of the landlords and the bourgeoisie.²

At the Sixth Congress, the Comintern tightened its control over each communist party. Under Part Five of the Statutes of 1928, entitled "The Relationship Between the Sections of the Communist International and the Executive Committee of the Comintern," the various parties were subjected to greater discipline than ever before.³ In the background, the power of Stalin began to be revealed, although at the congress itself Bukharin appeared to be the popular favorite. A year later Stalin stood alone at the pinnacle of power.

Sano, Ichikawa, Yamamoto, Takahashi Sadaki (who had been studying at the Lenin Institute since 1926), and Katayama constituted the Japanese delegation to the Sixth Congress. Maniwa and Namba, who were living in the Soviet Union, were accredited as observers.⁴ Katayama served on a committee on the platform and problems of the Soviet Communist Party; Sano, on committees on the international situation and on the platform of the Communist International; Yamamoto and Ichikawa, on a committee on the problem of war; and Takahashi, on a committee on colonies.

Although Katayama, as a member of the executive committee and the presidium, participated in a number of important discussions, his role was largely ceremonial. On the first day of the congress, he delivered an address in the name of the Japanese party and proletariat

and read a "Declaration on the Chinese Revolution" jointly sponsored by the British, American, and Japanese parties. His major contribution was to emphasize the need to transfer the leadership of the Japanese revolutionary movement from intellectuals to workers.⁵

Sano took an active part in committee and congress discussions on the international situation. In a general report to the congress, Bukharin had emphasized that the struggle against the danger of a new imperialist war, the defense of the Chinese revolution, and the defense of the Soviet Union were the three main tasks of the world proletariat. Sano reported to the congress that the delegation of the Japanese Communist Party was in complete agreement with this position and acknowledged that the party had an "especially great responsibility in carrying out these tasks in view of the active role played by Japanese imperialism in the Pacific." He summarized the steps taken by the party in the past year to strengthen itself:

In November 1927, the party was reorganized on the basis of factory cells. The party became a workers' party by enrolling workers, who constitute 80 per cent of the total membership, and expelling some inactive intellectuals. The party overcame the legalism, liquidationism, and ultra-left factionalism that prevailed before. Any fraction that did not submit to the revolutionary discipline of the party was expelled, and the unity of the party was attained. The Communist Party began to spread its revolutionary policy among the masses and maintained an existence independent of the mass organizations of the left. The party gained the support of the masses and at the same time, became the main base of the revolutionary masses—an independent political factor.

Sano was surprisingly optimistic, at least in the report, on prospects for the party. He concluded that nothing could prevent the growth of the party, despite the mass arrests of March 15 and the subsequent actions taken by the Tanaka cabinet, and he pledged that the party would fight the social democrats and the "liquidators" and would work to unite the proletariat under the Communist Party alone.⁶

In the theses on the "International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist International," the Japanese Communist Party was praised for overcoming ideological difficulties. The theses acknowledged that the task of converting the Japanese party into a mass party would not be easy. The party was urged to "exert every effort to defend the Chinese revolution and to fight against the predatory policy of Japanese imperialism."⁷

In August, both Yamamoto and Ichikawa addressed the congress,

expressing their approval of the theses on war—"The Struggle Against Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Communists"—which emphasized the need to transform imperialist war into civil war and then into a world proletarian revolution. Both men pledged the Japanese Communist Party to carry out that line, but Yamamoto spoke candidly of the party's weaknesses: "I must admit that the Japanese proletariat is ill-prepared to conduct a revolutionary struggle against Japanese imperialist militarism and against the crisis of a new world war—first, because of its comparatively small experience of the misery of wars, particularly of the last imperialist war, and second, because the Japanese party is very young." Yamamoto went on to describe other party failures:

It is true that we have preached antimilitarism to the masses and that in the last few years we have succeeded to some extent in organizing class struggles against Japanese intervention in revolutionary China and for the defense of the U.S.S.R. But not only was our propaganda weak—our organizational activities were not systematically directed to the revolutionary aim of the disintegration of the bourgeois army and the formation of a proletarian militia. Our work among the broad masses of the youth has been inadequate; there must be closer cooperation between the Communist Party and the Communist Youth League.

Yamamoto suggested that a short paragraph concerning antimilitarist work among youth be inserted in the theses on war, and he noted that lack of antimilitary education and training within the labor unions had been a "big mistake." He pointed out that the party operated under very difficult conditions and alluded to the recent arrests and the dissolution orders as "one of the war preparations of the Japanese bourgeoisie and landlords." Nevertheless, he, like Sano, sounded an optimistic note:

But we shall not be crushed. On the contrary, we will grow bigger and bigger. The Communist Party of Japan is now facing its most important task: the decisive struggle against the Japanese imperialist warmongers. In order to carry out this task successfully, we must work in close and systematic collaboration with the Chinese Communist Party, and concentrate on persistent work in the army and navy for an active struggle to defend the Soviet Union and support the Chinese Revolution, and for the revolutionary united front of all oppressed peoples in the East.

We, the Japanese communists, will test and harden ourselves through this struggle against imperialist wars, and try to carry out successfully the theses of the congress.⁸

The Japanese delegation also expressed their approval of the "Theses on the Revolutionary Movement in Colonial and Semi-colonial Countries" presented by Kuusinen, the chairman of the eastern bureau of the Comintern's executive committee, although Takahashi suggested some minor revisions.⁹ The theses pointed out the dangers of cooperation with bourgeois, nationalist-reformist, and petty bourgeois parties—a reflection of the bitter experience of failure in the efforts to secure Nationalist-Communist cooperation in China. One portion of the theses later caused considerable confusion in Japan and was regarded by some Japanese leftists as an example of the Comintern's inability to adapt strategy and tactics to conditions in Japan. That portion read:

Special workers' and peasants' parties, whatever revolutionary character they may possess, can sometimes be easily converted into petty bourgeois parties, and, accordingly, communists are advised not to organize such parties. The Communist Party can never build its organization on the basis of a fusion of two classes; similarly, it cannot make its task the organization of other parties on this basis, which is characteristic of petty bourgeois groups.

The fighting bloc of the masses of workers and peasants can find expression in carefully prepared and periodically convened joint conferences and congresses of representatives of revolutionary peasant unions (or their committees) and of trade unions; in certain circumstances, it may be expedient to create revolutionary committees of action, coordinating the activity of the organizations of the workers and peasants, conducting various mass activities, etc. Finally, during the insurrection period, one of the fundamental tasks of the Communist Party is to promote the creation of elected soviets of workers' and peasants' deputies.¹⁰

The Japanese communists found it difficult to reconcile this passage with their earlier instructions to form a labor-farmer party.

Ichikawa, Takahashi, Maniwa, Namba, and Sano Hiroshi (who, like Takahashi, had been a student at the Lenin Institute) departed for home in September. Sano, who had attended the Fifth World Congress of the Young Communist International during the summer, took with him the "Resolution of the Young Communist International on Japan" and planned to rebuild the disbanded Communist Youth League. Yamamoto remained in Moscow as the Japanese representative to the Profintern.

THE 1928 THESES

Sano Manabu, who had been elected to the Comintern's executive committee, also stayed on in Moscow in order to work out new policies

for the party in Japan in cooperation with the presidium of the executive committee of the Comintern. He was part of an ad hoc committee on Japan that included Vasiliev, chief of the organization department of the executive committee of the Comintern, and Heckert, vice-chairman of the executive committee of the Profintern. In early October, the presidium approved "Organizational Theses," which were based upon earlier discussions of the Japanese delegates,¹¹ and "Theses on the Immediate Tasks of the Japanese Communist Party," which were formulated by the committee on Japan.¹² Sano and Kuusinen decided that the Japanese Communist Party should hold a convention in 1929 to consider these new policies.¹³

The key innovation in the tactics approved by the Comintern was the decision to deny a revolutionary role for the Labor-Farmer Party and to concentrate upon transforming the Japanese Communist Party into a revolutionary mass party, with an increase in membership to about 5,000. This position was summed up by Sano:

In Japan there are three so-called proletarian parties, namely, the left-wing Labor-Farmer Party, the centrist Japan Labor-Farmer Party, and the right-wing Social Democratic Party. The last two are social democratic parties led by corrupt reformists. The left-wing Labor-Farmer Party was forced to dissolve by the government in April. Shortly thereafter, the Labor-Farmer Party Reorganization Preparatory Committee was established. It is obvious that the masses of the former Labor-Farmer Party and the preparatory committee are fighting the reactionaries. However, these are not proletarian parties in the proper sense of the word. The basic mass organization in which the [Communist] Party must actively work is the labor union, not a legal Labor-Farmer Party. The working class does not need two parties. The establishment of a revolutionary party is the supreme hope of the working class. A legal Labor-Farmer Party cannot play the revolutionary role of the [Communist] Party... [which] must, in its development into a mass party, absorb the enormous left-wing force brought together by the Labor-Farmer party... The establishment of a powerful, bolshevistic, communist party is now the primary and most important task of the working class. The preparatory committee and the Labor-Farmer Party movement are preliminary activities to that end.¹⁴

Much the same thing was stated in the "Theses on Immediate Tasks":

When the Labor-Farmer Party... was dissolved, the [Communist Party] was not well known to the proletariat. [It] was not a party of the masses; in fact, it had only recently appeared before the masses. The political struggle that should have been led by the [Communist Party] was led by the Labor-Farmer Party... The Labor-Farmer Party was a party in which two classes—workers and peasants—were fused. Therefore, it could not be

a leading revolutionary party. . . . The tasks of the proletarian vanguard are to rebuild and expand its own organization, to gain new energy from activities in all types of mass organizations, and to develop roots in a new Labor-Farmer Party preparatory association.

According to the theses, the Japanese Communist Party was to become more "proletarian." In recruiting new members, it was directed to consider the degree of class consciousness of candidates in order to win over those persons who would accept the party's program, pay membership fees, and work in party organizations. The theses further stated that "the party must focus its efforts upon forming cells in factories, especially in large cities where large factories are concentrated, in order to initiate activities and finance them on the local level. The party must avoid connecting the cells with the central organization." The party was urged to help create strong left-wing unions; specifically, it was to rebuild Hyogikai, organize more workers (including women) into unions, establish factory committees, form party fractions within reformist unions, and launch a movement for industrial unionism.¹⁵

Although the role of the Labor-Farmer Party was played down, the peasants were not to be forgotten. The Communist Party was to achieve a "militant unity" of the proletariat and the peasantry. The basic line regarding the peasants remained the same: "In Japanese villages, there remain semifeudal relationships such as the system of tenant rent in kind and the powerful political influence of landlords. To remove these, an agrarian revolution is needed." However, the strategy proposed was different: the key word now was to be expropriation. "The peasant movement has been struggling through court cases to lower land rents and to secure tenant rights. Now peasants are becoming conscious of the possibility of expropriation. Under present circumstances, the emphasis on tenancy disputes is no longer valid." What part was the party to play? The answer in the theses was that "the party must form fractions in the existing peasant unions to strengthen left-wing influence."¹⁶

The party was criticized by the Comintern because its propaganda and agitation were conducted on lines that were too abstract; it was directed to explain such things as the structure of the state and imperialist war "in a manner easy to understand." It was also instructed to commence activity among soldiers and sailors as well as among veterans' associations, "to overcome nationalism and hatred of colonial peoples, and to propagate the ideas of racial self-determination and independence from imperialist countries." Finally, it was directed

to prepare the workers for street fighting and revolution by organizing demonstrations: "When it is politically appropriate, the party must organize demonstrations, whether or not there is police clearance, in order to mobilize workers into action from their factories and homes."¹⁷

Meanwhile, party leadership in Japan suffered a serious blow. In mid-September, Watanabe and Nabeyama traveled to Shanghai in response to a request from Janson. They heard a preliminary report on the Sixth Congress of the Comintern prepared by Chou En-lai, received funds from Janson, and attended a meeting of the Pan-Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat, which had been established in China in May 1927 with Earl Browder as chairman.* Watanabe then proceeded to Taiwan disguised as a dry goods merchant to assist with the organization of the Taiwanese Communist Party. At Keelung, he ran into difficulty. The police stopped him on October 6, and since his travel papers were not in order, they decided to hold him for further investigation. Watanabe drew a gun, shot a policeman, and then attempted to flee. When cornered, he turned the gun on himself.† Nabeyama, who had remained at Shanghai, was shocked by the news from Taiwan. He was invited by Janson to seek refuge in Moscow, but declined, preferring to return to Japan.¹⁸

The party's loss of Watanabe was compounded by other difficulties. The police intensified their efforts to root out communists, arresting more than 40 party members, including key leaders of the Communist Youth League, in the period from August to October. Kokuryo, who had been left in charge of party affairs by Watanabe and Nabeyama, was jailed on October 3. The police were especially alert to the possibility of incidents in connection with the enthronement of the Showa emperor, scheduled for November 3.

* The Pan-Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat was the Far Eastern branch of the Profintern. This organization and the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern had been established as permanent bodies with headquarters in Vladivostok. The former was moved first to Hankow and then Shanghai in 1927; however, it returned to Vladivostok later in 1927 because of difficulties created by the Kuomintang-Chinese Communist Party split and the rift in Chinese-Russian relations. The Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern appears to have been moved to Moscow earlier and secretly moved later, in 1930, to Shanghai (Deakin and Storry, p. 86; interview with Sheng Yueh by Robert A. Burton, Lawrence, Kansas, October 27, 1965).

† Watanabe was eulogized in *International Press Correspondence*. One eulogy, offered by the Central European Bureau of the Profintern, appeared in the December 27, 1928, issue (pp. 1742-43). Another, written by Nabeyama and signed by Yamamoto Kenzo, appeared in the November 30, 1928, issue (p. 1615). It stated: "He is a victim of the bloody hands of the Mikado, the bourgeoisie, and the landowners. His work will be carried on by the Japanese proletariat. The tasks, dropped from his lifeless hands, will be taken up by fresh thousands."

Despite police vigilance, the party leaders managed to maintain a small organizational core. Mitamura, who barely escaped arrest after a running gun battle with the police in Tokyo, took the lead in forming a provisional directorate, which was soon replaced by a small central bureau under the leadership of Ichikawa and several returnees from Moscow. In December, Ichikawa met secretly with Maniwa and Sunama Kazuyoshi near Mt. Tsukuba in Ibaraki Prefecture to lay the foundation for the establishment of a new and larger central bureau. As party leader, Ichikawa assigned his two comrades the tasks of taking charge of organizational and political activities; Sunama was also to serve as editor of *The Proletarian News*. Despite difficult conditions, the communists managed to resume continuous publication of *Red Flag*, with Issue No. 24 appearing in December 1928. Nabeyama returned to Japan in February 1929 and shared party leadership with Ichikawa, concentrating upon labor activities. As the central bureau expanded with the addition of Kutobe trainees, more of whom left Moscow for Japan toward the end of 1928, it made new efforts to establish local branches, however small, in industrial areas. These publishing and recruiting activities were financed by funds that Ichikawa received from Comintern representatives in Shanghai and a Chinese contact in Tokyo.¹⁹

The most immediate and important matter that confronted party leaders was to define their position on the reestablishment of the Labor-Farmer Party. They followed the Comintern line determined earlier at Moscow, and outlined their policy in an editorial in the December 5th issue of *The Proletarian News*:

Because we once lacked the understanding to distinguish clearly between a political party and a mobilizing organization, we fell into the error of thinking that we needed a "legal proletarian party" in addition to the Communist Party. This dissolutionist view must be exterminated quickly. There can be no proletarian party other than the Communist Party. "Political freedom" and the liberation of workers and peasants can be achieved only by uniting firmly under the banner of the Communist Party. "Legal proletarian parties" that oppose the organization of a communist party and reject illegal activities are all supporters of social democracy. They are all of the same ilk, however much they may pretend to be opposed to each other.

The communists, in their efforts to prevent the formation of a new Labor-Farmer Party, found themselves on the same side as the authorities. When a preparatory committee led by Oyama Ikuo and Hososako

scheduled an inaugural meeting of a new Worker-Farmer Party (Rodosha Nominto) for December 22-24, the police ordered it cancelled. On December 28, the preparatory committee decided to give up the idea of organizing a party and to form instead a Labor-Farmer League for Securing Political Freedom (Seijiteki Jiyu Kakutoku Rono Domei). From the outset, the league was an illegal body, and one in which communist influence was decisive. The communists argued that a new Labor-Farmer Party would not be effective through legal activities; they maintained that a wiser course would be to expand the underground Communist Party and use the league to develop mass organizations among workers and peasants.²⁰

The position taken by the league was highly unsettling to the local branches of the former Labor-Farmer Party. Many members were shocked to learn that they were not to work for party reorganization; some were not satisfied with the decision. Mizutani, who had been elected to the House of Representative as a Labor-Farmer Party candidate, broke with the Labor-Farmer League and on January 17, 1929, established the Labor-Farmer Masses Party (Rono Taishuto), essentially a local Kyoto party. Yamamoto Senji, a lecturer in biology at Kyoto Imperial University who, like Mizutani, had been elected to the Diet as a Labor-Farmer Party representative, and Oyama Ikuo were spokesmen for the league and branded the new party "a group of traitors."*

As the members of the Labor-Farmer Party tried to rebuild some kind of organization, the Proletarian Masses Party, dominated by Ronoha elements, joined the centrist Japan Labor-Farmer Party led by Aso and Sugiyama, the rightist Japan Farmer Party under Hirano Rikizo, and four regional parties to form the Japan Masses Party (Nihon Taishuto) in December 1928.²¹ The new party's platform was moderate and differed little from that of the Social Democratic Party. Both held the goal of achieving the "liberation" of workers and peasants through legal means; both were, of course, the objects of bitter

* Yamamoto was very close to the Communist Party. He remained in the Diet after the dissolution of the Labor-Farmer Party and opposed the imperial ordinance that established capital punishment for subversive activities. He also spoke out against the government's China policy. He held his seat until March 5, 1929, when he was stabbed to death by a right-wing terrorist. When memorial services for Yamamoto and Watanabe were held in Tokyo on March 8 and in Kyoto on March 15, they were, for all practical purposes, communist demonstrations. Katayama eulogized him in *International Press Correspondence* and characterized his murder as "a carefully planned act on the part of the Tanaka government" (IX, April 5, 1929, 356). After World War II, the Japanese Communist Party honored Yamamoto by conferring party membership upon him.

attacks by the communists. The Ronoha elements did not remain in the Japan Masses Party very long. Suzuki Mosaburo, Inomata, Kuroda, Sakai, and others left the party in the spring of 1929 because, in their view, it had moved to the right. Moreover, they had been defeated by Aso and Hirano in an internal leadership struggle. Sakai and Kuroda then took the lead in forming the Tokyo Proletarian Party (Tokyo Musanto).

LABOR AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

On the labor front, the communists were active in establishing an underground successor to Hyogikai. In late December, some 30 representatives from 24 unions, largely members of the Communist Party, met to form the National Council of Japanese Labor Unions (Nihon Rodo Kumiai Zenkoku Kyogikai), or Zenkyo, as a federation of industrial unions. Its communist leaders were, for the most part, intellectuals with some university education, and were extremely young. (For example, a young man in his mid-twenties, Ito Tamotsu, drafted the federation's charter.) Many of Zenkyo's leaders had been disciples of Fukumoto and had entered the Communist Party or the Communist Youth League as students.²² Among them, only Maeno Zenshiro (later provisional chairman of Zenkyo) and Hosoya Matsuta were workers. Mitamura had the most influence; his militant views generally prevailed. Initial membership was about 5,500 and was organized into factory cells, but scarcely half of the members could be considered politically conscious and committed to Zenkyo policies.

Zenkyo made no attempt to hide its communist position. For example, in January 1929 its organ, *Labor News*,* declared: "In order to liberate the working class from the pits of oppression, to destroy capitalism, and to achieve communism, our council must be under the political leadership of the Japanese Communist Party, which is the organizational unit of the most advanced element of the Japanese proletariat, and must preserve the class character of left-wing unionism."²³ *Labor News* was generally unequivocal in its opposition to the Social Democratic and Japan Masses parties, but Zenkyo had

* Writing about *Labor News*, Scalapino says: "Since all activities had to be underground, it was difficult to print and circulate a newspaper. Publication places were frequently changed and dates were irregular. Generally, between 5,000 and 10,000 copies were printed, and hand-circulated with special attention to factories and workers' districts" (Scalapino, manuscript on the Japanese labor movement).

to be realistic about them. As one Zenkyo leader noted, "Existing legal and illegal organizations should be used to the maximum."²⁴

One basic Zenkyo objective was to mobilize labor support for strikes. The maximum objective was a national strike, but since this was unrealistic, the union leaders decided to concentrate upon strikes in key industries in major cities.²⁵ They attempted to organize some demonstrations and strikes, and even tried sabotage. The usual result was quick suppression and arrest by the police. Under these circumstances, it was difficult for Zenkyo to hold members, let alone increase membership.

The youth movement was another area where the communists tried to expand their influence. As mentioned earlier, Sano Hiroshi returned to Japan in January 1929 with the "Resolution of the Young Communist International on Japan."²⁶ This document was highly critical of past communist efforts in the youth movement, the major complaint being that the Japanese communists did "not yet fully understand the treacherous role of social democracy." The resolution declared that "the organization of the Communist Youth League is impossible without a struggle against the social democratic youth organizations." It proposed the following tactics: First, the league should concentrate on winning over the young workers—should take the initiative in enlisting them in the struggle for immediate goals through youth sections in the trade unions, youth committees in the factories, etc. In its struggle against the social democratic youth organizations it should have as its aim the winning over of "the best elements" by criticizing the principles of social reformism and propagandizing those of communism. Second, "preparatory societies" for the formation of a new Proletarian Youth League should be established and become the center of a struggle against the government. Third, since the league was to have "a great role to play in time of war against the colonial countries and the Soviet Union," intensive work should be done among the armed forces and the various military organizations for the young. The league should advocate the creation of a proletarian defense force. Finally, youth sections in the peasant leagues should be developed and attention directed toward the young farm workers, who should be organized in an Agricultural Workers' Union. With the help of former league members like Oyama Iwao and Tateyama Toshitada, Sano and Takahashi Sadaki reorganized the Communist Youth League in January and began publishing *Proletarian Youth* (*Musan Seinen*) the following month.²⁷

GROWTH OF THE PARTY

The Communist Party grew steadily and was increasingly active in the early months of 1929. The number of members expanded from a mere 30 in December 1928 to over 200 by April 1929. According to one estimate, there were 80 members in the Tokyo-Yokohama area, 57 around Osaka, and 78 in other cities and prefectures.²⁸ The central committee members at this time were Ichikawa Shoichi, Nabeyama, Mitamura, and Sano Manabu (in Shanghai after mid-March). The members of the secretariat and their responsibilities were: Maniwa—organizational department; Sunama—political department; Mitamura—labor union department; Takahashi Sadaki—*The Proletarian News* and *Marxism*. Sugimoto Fumio, Ando Toshio, and Toshiki Yukimori were central organizers.²⁹ The party was successful in establishing fractions in various mass organizations, and had groups in the Labor-Farmer League for Political Freedom, Zenkyo, the Japan Masses Party, and the Preparatory Association for an Antiwar League.³⁰

The party also stepped up its propaganda activities. Not only did it operate more effectively through its regular publication channels (the circulation of *Red Flag* increased from 200 copies in December 1928 to 600 in March 1929), but it began to turn out special pamphlets and “appeals,” usually in quantities of 500 or more. Some of the pamphlets were special printings of the various theses approved by the Comintern; others were: *Outline of the Present Organizational Activities of the Japanese Communist Party* (December 1928); *The Fifty-Sixth Session of the Diet and the Japanese Communist Party’s Slogans* (January 1929); *Our present Tasks in the Revolutionary Labor Movement* (February 1929); *The Bourgeois Parliament and the Government of Workers and Peasants* (February 1929); and *The Present Organizational Work of the Japanese Communist Party, Especially Consultation on the Organization and Activity of Cells* (March 1929). Titles of some of the appeals were: “Appeals to Workers and Peasants Throughout the Country on the Anniversary of the March 15 Case”; “Comrade Yamamoto Senji Has Fallen Victim to the White Terror’s Dagger”; “Organize Labor-Farmer Election Campaign Leagues and Send Revolutionary Workers to the Municipal Assembly”; “All Young Workers—Fight by Cooperating for an International Proletarian Women’s Day”; and “Demand the Right to Vote and to Run for Office for Men and Women of Eighteen on International Proletarian Women’s Day.”

The Communist Party resumed the offensive on the theoretical front when regular publication of *Marxism* began in December 1928. An article by Sano Manabu—"Political and Organizational Tasks of the Japanese Proletariat"—set the stage. Criticizing the tendency to analyze the nature of the coming revolution in Japan only on the basis of some general theory—a tendency that the Comintern itself appeared to have had at the Eighth Congress—Sano emphasized the need to consider the conditions peculiar to Japan:

The coming bourgeois-democratic revolution in Japan will be different in nature from those experienced in the capitalist or in the colonial or semi-colonial countries. . . . The proletariat will carry out the change as the leading force in a violent clash with the imperialist bourgeoisie, which holds hegemony in a political alliance with the landlords. This change will turn quickly into a proletarian revolution—so quickly that the change will mark the beginning of a proletarian revolution. . . . Japan, which is . . . a reactionary imperialist power in world politics, stands on the eve of a bourgeois-democratic revolution because of the contradictory feudal relations in its domestic life. In the case of Japan, there will be a special type of bourgeois-democratic revolution in the developing process of the world's proletarian revolution.³¹

According to Sano, the central task was to fight the imperial system, because the Japanese emperor stood for the landlords and was the most reactionary political weapon in the hands of imperialism. "It is impossible to change the bourgeois state machinery without overthrowing him. As the class struggle intensifies, the monarch as an agent of the bourgeoisie and landlords becomes the most important aspect of political life. Therefore, the slogan 'Overthrow the Monarchy' becomes interwoven with struggles against the crisis of war and for the defense of the Chinese revolution." Sano claimed that it was a serious error for the party to have been passive with regard to the emperor "in the period of liquidationism." He was especially critical of the Ronoha on this point: "Although the liquidationist Inomata, who betrayed our party, says the monarch merely represents a tradition, can any tradition without a class basis exist in the world?" In insisting that the monarchy was the concentrated manifestation of all the feudal remnants in the structure of the state, Sano was emphasizing a basic point of difference between the communists and the Ronoha—one that had tended to be neglected because of the preoccupation with the "incomplete agrarian revolution." According to Sano, "because they made light of the imperial system, the Ronoha was truly monarchist."³²

Takahashi Sadaki, as the editor of *Marxism*, intensified the attack on the Ronoha. In an article in the February 1929 issue, he boldly asserted:

Without an agrarian revolution, there can be no free development of agricultural production nor any basis for the construction of socialism. Without the abolition of the imperial system and the establishment of a republican form of government, there can be no confrontation between capital and wage labor. Existing class relations are bound to make the coming change bourgeois-democratic, and to this end, the leadership of the proletariat is needed. . . . The proletariat will, for the first time, face its true enemy. The republican form of government provides the best stage for a life-or-death struggle. Herein lies the significance of the struggle aimed at a democratic revolution.³³

Takahashi complained that the "left-wing social democrats of the Ronoha" ignored the problem of political power by avoiding the question of the imperial system. This was true, of course, largely because of the practical considerations involved in maintaining a legal political movement. But the question of practicality was ignored by Takahashi, who raged: "They do not understand the reason why the proletariat puts up the slogan 'Government of Workers and Peasants.' Frothing at the mouth they cry, 'Too early, too early yet.' In bold letters they spell out their strategy—'Overthrow Imperialism'—but their strategy includes the demand to dissolve the Japanese Communist Party and a tacit agreement with right-wing reformists."

After this initial outburst, Takahashi sought to use *Marxism* to deliver a more deliberate all-out attack on Inomata's theories, especially those theories expressed in his influential article "The Political Position of the Contemporary Japanese Bourgeoisie." In an article in the April 1929 issue, Takahashi began by reiterating that "the issues involved in the controversies between us and the dissolutionists of the Ronoha are above all those relating to the nature of the coming revolution—the motivating power of the revolution and the design of strategy for revolution." He charged that the dissolutionist group, "because of its cowardice and crude understanding of historical materialism," had either underestimated or ignored the significance of the struggle for bourgeois democracy. He attributed this, in large part, to the influence of Yamakawa, who had "cynically criticized the champions of bourgeois democracy."

Takahashi attempted to analyze the theoretical basis of Inomata's position and to point out his errors. Following the lead of Watanabe,

Sano, and Murayama, he insisted that the restoration government failed to reform agriculture in any fundamental way and left the system of production and the class structure "semifeudal" and "exploitative." In support of his judgment, he cited the existing inequalities of landownership and of payment of rent in kind—"a mere variant of ground rent in service labor." He charged that Inomata was wrong in concluding that the material basis of absolutism disappeared with the Meiji Restoration and that absolutism had been reduced to mere tradition. Quite the contrary, said Takahashi, "Semifeudal landownership and exploitative production relationships still provide the material foundation for the survival of semifeudal forces in Japan's politics and economy today." He was attempting to lay the groundwork for an assault upon Inomata's contention that monopoly capitalism dominated the government through parliament and party cabinets and that therefore the coming revolution was to be a proletarian one. According to Takahashi, Inomata erred in ignoring the significance of the imperial system. He repeated the words of his February article: "Without the abolition of the imperial system and the establishment of a republican type of government, there can be no real confrontation between capital and labor as classes. Republican government will provide the best ground for a life-or-death struggle between the two classes."³⁴ Takahashi regarded this article as the opening round in a battle with the Ronoha, writing in conclusion that he planned an even "fuller response to Inomata's challenge." He intended to publish a more detailed explanation of communist strategy based on an analysis of Japan's "feudal forces." However, before he could carry out his plans, the party and its publications were suppressed by the government.³⁵

The Ronoha was attacked on organizational grounds, as well as on theoretical grounds. In Moscow, Katayama wrote:

Yamakawa and his "Rono" group are acting exactly as the mensheviks in Russia did after the revolution of 1905, not only with respect to their political platform, but also with respect to their attacks upon the Communist Party and their denunciations of the left-wing leaders of the communist mass organizations as "ultra-left extremists" and "factionalists." Although the Russian mensheviks were liquidators who urged the dissolution of the underground Bolshevik Party and advocated the exclusive use of legal means, they were unable to stay in tsarist Russia. They had to preach their dissolutionist principles in exile. It is a different case with the Yamakawa group, who are allowed full freedom to advocate their theories under the regime of the reactionary Tanaka government. This

shows that they stand quite close to the ruling class and that they are not a threat to the Tanaka government, but instead are useful in the suppression of the communist movement. The menshevist theory and the dissolutionist tendencies of Yamakawa should be thoroughly exposed before the Japanese proletariat and peasantry, and discredited forever.³⁶

Katayama delivered the coup de grace to the Ronoha claim of Comintern support in the April 1929 issue of *Marxism*, again branding the Ronoha "right-wing social democrats, liquidationists, and factionists."

The increased activity of the communists, designed to popularize the party, could not help but alert the police and pave the way for another disaster. One focus of party activity was the Tokyo municipal assembly election scheduled for March. Under instructions from the central committee, a small group under Namba, who served as a local organizer, actively distributed pamphlets and handbills on the streets. The police arrested Namba on March 18 and found documents in his room relating to communist cells. On the basis of this evidence, the police made several more arrests, including one of the central organizers, Sugimoto; more important, they arrested Maniwa, and in his room discovered key party documents, including a list of members, a code book, letters of recommendation for membership, budget statements, and a distribution chart for party publications. The secret organization of the whole party was laid bare. The party had been alerted for police action, however. At the news of Maniwa's arrest, Nabeyama disposed of other party documents and suggested that several key members go underground.³⁷ Maniwa, who had been ordered by Nabeyama to destroy the party roster, was later expelled by the party during the course of a public trial in 1931-32.

After a month of preparation and consultation with the judicial authorities, the police were ready to move against the entire party. Striking at dawn on April 16, 1929, in 30 prefectures, they rounded up over 700 persons, including most of the key leaders. Only Ichikawa, Nabeyama, and Mitamura escaped the dragnet. They were caught shortly thereafter, however—Ichikawa on April 27, and Nabeyama and Mitamura two days later at a house of assignation (*machiai*) in Tokyo.* Of those questioned by the police, over 200 party members and approximately 50 sympathizers were held for trial.³⁸ The final

* Since the Meiji Restoration, it had been the practice of those engaged in clandestine activities to seek temporary relaxation in brothels and *machiai*. These often served as hideouts, because policemen generally did not enter them. The *machiai* had a particular stigma for many communists because of their "bourgeois" nature.

blow was Sano Manabu's arrest by Chinese police at Shanghai on June 16. Sano, who had been in Shanghai since mid-March, had sent Comintern orders to Japan for the party to send as many as 12 members to hold a party congress in Shanghai, to designate several central committee members to remain in Shanghai, and to send 50 young party members to Kutobe. The April arrests upset these plans; in fact, Sano lost contact with the Japanese party. After his arrest, the Chinese turned him over to the Japanese police, who returned him to Japan in August.³⁹

The April arrests represented the severest blow yet suffered by the communists. The party organization was smashed and party influence in mass organizations was severely undermined.* Eighty-one top Zenkyo leaders were arrested, with the result that the union was barely able to maintain operations. The communists were equally hard hit in the peasant movement, where 14 prefectural associations of unions affiliated with the National Peasant Union were either destroyed or forced to cease activity temporarily.⁴⁰ The situation was the same on the theoretical front. *Marxism* was closed down after five years of publication. The controversies between the party and the Ronoha came to an end, at least temporarily. On the Ronoha side, Inomata ceased to contribute to *Labor-Farmer* in September 1929 and formally resigned from the publishing group on the grounds of "poor health" and a desire to "reexamine his own views." The controversies were resumed a few years later, but they were more academic than political; they had more to do with interpreting Japan's modern development than with formulating strategy and tactics of revolution.

REESTABLISHMENT OF THE PARTY

It was several months before the remnants of the Japanese Communist Party could work effectively for the reestablishment of some form of organization. Leadership came from the younger fractionists in Zenkyo who had escaped arrest and who had restored contact with member unions in the Kanto area. They were particularly active in the unions of Korean workers.⁴¹ The most important leaders were

* The roundup of April 16 took place, according to Ichikawa, "because of the intensifying class struggle..., which burst into flames again at the beginning of 1929, and the impending crisis of an imperialist war. The bourgeoisie had to strike a heavy blow against the Japanese Communist Party, which, far from going out of existence, was gaining the trust of the masses, becoming their friend, and gaining influence" (Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, p. 120).

Maeno, provisional chairman of Zenkyo, Tanaka Seigen (Kiyoharu), a twenty-three-year-old Tokyo Imperial University graduate,* and Sato Shuichi, of the Kanto Printers Union. In June 1929, they brought together the few remaining communists in the Tokyo-Yokohama area and formed a provisional Tokyo regional committee of the Japanese Communist Party.⁴² A month later, Maeno and Tanaka joined with Sano Hiroshi of the Communist Youth League and Sakinaka Toranosuke, one of the Kutobe graduates who had returned to Japan in late 1928, to form a party central bureau. They met on July 7 or 8 in Saitama Prefecture and organized the bureau as follows: Tanaka, chairman of the central committee and head of the organization department; Sano, member of the central committee, head of the agitation-propaganda department, and chief editor of *Red Flag*; Maeno, member of the central committee and head of the labor union department; and Sakinaka, head of the techniques department—a special department whose functions were maintaining communication between the central bureau and the party organization below, promoting illegal activities, and protecting the identity of bureau members.⁴³

The new leadership, largely inexperienced, found it difficult to operate effectively, especially in its campaign to recruit new members, and tended to become defeatist. A number of factors served to weaken the party. The police were a constant threat to the central bureau. In October, Tanaka was arrested, and though he managed to escape, he had to remain in hiding for months, and was forced to move from one hideout to another in places remote from Tokyo. Feuding in Zenkyo also weakened the party. The communist leadership in Zenkyo had to resist a group of dissident Fukumotoists known as the Red Champions League (*Sekishoku Senshi Domei*), who wanted to take over the central bureau and who were active in influencing Zenkyo

* Tanaka had entered the Communist Party in the autumn of 1927, while still a student at Tokyo Imperial University. He later recalled: "At the time, I felt absolutely no dissatisfaction with the existing social order. I was only searching painfully for truth and for something that I might wholeheartedly accept as my way of life—a common phenomenon among young people.... I discovered Dr. Kawakami Hajime's book *The Story of the Poor*. I was touched by its unselfish love and moved by its humanism. Later I read *Studies in Social Problems* [*Shakai Mondai Kenkyu*, a monthly edited by Kawakami from January 1919], and finally I undertook the study of materialism and capitalism....

"What especially attracted me to communism (bolshevism) were [the stories of] the activities of the self-sacrificing Russian bolsheviks. I was deeply moved by the biographies of the heroes of the Russian Revolution... and by the old Russian revolutionists... who selflessly worked for their people and their country. These were the motives behind my advance toward communism" (Tanaka Seigen; cited in Swearingen and Langer, p. 39).

unions in order to strengthen their position.* The question of how to handle the league tended to divide the communist leaders and, for a time, split Zenkyo into opposing groups. One group led by Sato, chief of the communist fraction, argued that Zenkyo should adopt a flexible attitude toward members of the league; another led by Maeno rejected that idea and maintained that all such elements should be expelled. Sato apparently made a distinction between the character and role of mass organizations such as labor unions and those of the party, whereas Maeno adhered to the policy of putting unions under the party's control. This difference, as well as personal hostility, became the basis of a feud that could not be resolved, and resulted in Sato's being excluded from the new central bureau of the party. The bureau sided with Maeno, and at its third meeting, near the end of July, it decided to remove Sato from the party fraction in Zenkyo. When Sato resisted the decision and continued to operate independently in the union, the bureau appointed a new fraction leader.⁴⁴

Finally, the party was weakened by new competition from the legal left. On August 8, with communist influence diminishing, Oyama Ikuo, Kawakami, and other members of the Labor-Farmer League for Securing Political Freedom issued an appeal for the establishment of a new party—the New Labor-Farmer Party (Shin Rodo Nominto). They were no longer willing to accept the communist view that nothing should be done until communist strategy and tactics were worked out. Instead, Oyama and the others gave in to a demand that the league play a more positive role through a new legal party, at least until such a time as the Communist Party could be reorganized and strengthened.

DEFLECTIONS OF PARTY MEMBERS

The new central bureau was confronted with a serious threat from another quarter—a group of communists who, after their arrest in March 1928, began to advocate dissolution of the party. The situation did not come to a head until the late spring and summer of 1929, when

* Not much is known about the Red Champions League. According to the July 15, 1929, issue of *Red Flag*, the group was organized in July 1928 by Fukumotoists. Failing to achieve power within the party, it dissolved itself in January 1929. After the April 1929 arrests, the league was reestablished and was particularly active among labor unions. The June 16 and June 22, 1929, issues of *The Proletarian News* branded its members "spies."

a number of the "dissolutionists" were released from jail on bail. The central bureau, in the July 15 issue of *Red Flag*, argued for expulsion of the elements who favored dissolution, and on September 30 decided to remove them from the party rolls. On October 21, *Red Flag* reported the expulsion of Kawai Etsuzo, Mizuno, Nakamura, Sano Fumio, Murayama, Inamura Ryuichi, Asano, Toyota Sunao, Minami, Murao, Kadoya Hiroshi, and Koreeda Kyoji. (Two other party members—Namba and Ohashi Toru—were expelled for divulging party secrets after their arrest.)⁴⁵

The denunciation of the "dissolutionists" in *Red Flag* was sweeping. It accused them individually and collectively of campaigning for the dissolution of the party and separation from the Comintern, of renouncing the central slogans laid down in the 1927 theses concerning abolition of the monarchy and confiscation of large landholdings, of attempting to reduce the party program to petty bourgeois reformism, and of disgracing the revolutionary tradition of the party, as the Ronoha had done. The bureau used strong language because it feared that the influence of the dissidents would grow. History ultimately proved the bureau's judgment correct, for this movement, which started in a relatively small way, eventually spread throughout the ranks of the communists.

Kawai provided the initial leadership for the dissidents. While in jail at Osaka, he wrote notes criticizing the communists' frontal attack on the imperial system, a policy that decisively separated the Japanese Communist Party from the socialist parties. He preferred to place emphasis on eliminating the corrupt elements around the throne in order to carry out systematic reform. As he began to think through this approach, he concluded that there was no need for a communist party or a relationship with the Comintern.⁴⁶ Kawai's arguments persuaded Murayama, who took a similar position during the course of their trial before the Osaka Court of Appeals in June 1929.⁴⁷

Mizuno was the most important figure to follow Kawai's lead. A disciple of Fukumoto, he had served as chief of the party's central secretariat. He had become disillusioned with Fukumotoism after the Comintern's criticism and had become defeatist because of the constant suppression of the party by the state. Starting with the assumption that the Communist Party was isolated from the masses, Mizuno came to the conclusion that there was a need for a bold shift of strategy based on an understanding of the conditions peculiar to Japan.⁴⁸ He

posed three questions: (1) "Do the masses of Japan now believe that they cannot advance even one step toward their liberation without abolishing the monarchy?" (2) "Objectively, does the monarchy appear as a yoke and absolute obstacle to the masses?" (3) "Is the Japanese monarchy likely to become a yoke on the masses in the future?" His own answers to these questions were in the negative, and like Kawai, he went on to develop the basis for a socialist movement within the framework of the imperial system. He argued that the throne had been a center of national worship from ancient times and that it had never been tied to political or economic power, a situation that made the Japanese imperial household different from tsarist and other foreign monarchical systems. For this reason, Mizuno advised communists to give up the slogans "Abolish the Monarchy" and "Confiscate the Lands of the Imperial Household," because they had tended to alienate the masses.

Mizuno was highly critical of the party's leadership, on both personal and political grounds. He attacked the leaders for what he called conduct in a "tradition of corruption and degeneration."

Now we hear that the party central after the March 15 arrests was involved in debauchery at a *machiai*. They are said to have wasted thousands of yen from party funds for geisha at a *machiai*! Two of our most trusted leaders were arrested while sleeping with geisha at a *machiai*. . . . These leaders inherited a corrupt tradition of the party and sometimes added to it, instead of eliminating it! I have heard that some leaders were unwilling to hold a standing committee meeting at any place other than a *machiai* or restaurant! One standing committee member, who had squandered funds for a trip to Russia on geisha, cheated his comrades to get additional travel funds, on the pretext that he had been robbed.

Mizuno then criticized what he called "a complete failure in political direction." He stated: "Had the party been a legal entity, the central would have been voted out by the masses at the general election. It was able to keep its position simply because the party was illegal and abusing that illegality, completely defied the principle of democratic centralism." Going still further, he appealed to ordinary party members to display "real heroism as true bolsheviks" and renounce the corrupt central leadership. He ended by calling for the party's dissolution: "Here I announce to all the masses of workers and peasants of Japan that party members should resolutely dissolve the Japanese Communist Party . . . and boldly advance toward the liberation movement in

a renewed spirit. I express my ardent hope for a militant union with the masses.”

Mizuno’s argument was hardly complete without a demand for separation from the Comintern. Writing much later with the advantage of hindsight, he claimed that the relationship with the Comintern had been bothering him for some time.

I went over to China . . . to represent Japan at the Far Eastern Bureau and lived with more than ten delegates from foreign countries for nearly one year. It [the Far Eastern Bureau], like the present Far Eastern Cominform, was centered around those from the Soviet Union. There I found that my sense of humanity was incompatible with communism. I realized, after witnessing the effects of the Chinese revolution and the instructions and policies of the Comintern, that the use of any means to attain the objectives of a certain country [the Soviet Union] or party [the Russian Communist Party] is incompatible with humanism. Upon my return home, I frankly spoke of my impressions to Watanabe Masanosuke, then chairman of the central executive committee of the Japanese Communist Party. He reproached me, saying, “You are, after all, an intellectual, and should know better than to talk such nonsense.” But I did not yield. Soon I was jailed, and after some two years of serious thought there, I chose defection.⁴⁹

Like many of his comrades, Mizuno found it difficult to accept Comintern orders regarding the emancipation of Japanese colonies. He tended to make a special case for Japan’s colonialism, on the ground that Japan was a relatively backward nation compared to England and France.⁵⁰

Under Mizuno’s influence, a number of communists, including Asano, Kadoya, Minami, Toyota, and Murao, announced their defection in official statements to the authorities. In general, they echoed the sentiments of Mizuno and called for the establishment of a legal party appropriate for conditions in Japan.⁵¹ In June 1930, under the leadership of Mizuno and Minami, they formed the so-called Japanese Communist Party Workers’ Faction (*Nihon Kyosanto Rodosha*) in order to achieve that objective. They used the title “Workers Faction,” or *Rodosha*, because they attributed the collapse of the Japanese Communist Party to an overemphasis on theory and intellectualism. The *Rodosha* proved to have little appeal for either workers or intellectuals, however. It was bitterly attacked by communists in and out of jail, and it was regarded with utmost suspicion by the socialists. Some faction members continued to feel attracted to the Japanese Communist Party, and ultimately returned to the fold. Similarly, Kawai and

Murayama, who cooperated with the Workers Faction, were allowed to rejoin the party.⁵²

The central bureau of the party struggled to prevent the formation of the New Labor-Farmer Party advocated by Oyama, Kawakami, and other members of the legal left. Bureau policy continued to be based on the proposition that the Communist Party was the only organization that could fight with unity and discipline under oppressive conditions. Furthermore, the communists still held that a legal party could not avoid becoming a social democratic party. However, their arguments did not satisfy those members of the Labor-Farmer League for Securing Political Freedom who wanted a legal political organization clearly distinct from the centrist and right-wing socialist parties. The communists were able to maintain their dominant position in the league, renamed the Labor-Farmer League (Rono Domei), but only by expelling Oyama and the others. The expulsion did not deter the dissidents from their objective. Oyama presided over the inaugural meeting of the New Labor-Farmer Party on November 2-3 and announced that communists would be excluded and that the party would work entirely along legal political lines. This disavowal of communist support brought the new party closer to the moderate camp and earned for it the abuse and slander of the communists, who charged its members with being "agents of the bourgeoisie."⁵³

The Comintern was quick to join the Japanese communists in condemnation of the new party and of all "liquidationist tendencies." In January 1930, the West European Bureau of the Comintern branded Oyama and his followers agents of the bourgeoisie and called on the communists "to conduct an unrelenting struggle against them." It also put forward a tactical program for the communists.

The chief tasks for all members of the Communist Party of Japan and all advanced workers are: the strengthening of the Communist Party of Japan against the liquidators and against legalism; broad political agitation among the masses, above all in the factories; preparation for the organization and carrying out of mass strikes and demonstrations; propaganda and organization of strikes of workers in various branches of industry in all industrial centers. The approach of an economic and political crisis, the rationalization of industry, the growth of unemployment, etc., create the conditions for a radicalization of the broad masses of workers and peasants and a rapid growth of the revolutionary movement. In these circumstances, the successes of the revolutionary movement depend wholly and entirely upon the ability, the energy, and the determination of the members of the Communist Party of Japan.⁵⁴

EXPANSION OF COMMUNIST INFLUENCE

Despite the many difficulties the communist bureau faced, it expanded its activities and increased its influence. It was active in Zenkyo's reconstruction movement, although it was unable to resolve the differences between Maeno and Sato, and it reorganized the Communist Youth League. Its members were among the sponsors of the Japanese League Against Imperialism (Nihon Hantei Domei), which designated August 1 as antiwar day. Publication of *Red Flag*, which had been suspended in April, was resumed with issue No. 28, dated July 15, 1929; circulation was some 500 copies. By October, circulation had risen to 800 copies; it was distributed by Communist Youth League members, largely Tokyo Imperial University students.⁵⁵ The bureau also continued to publish *The Proletarian News* until September, when it was banned by the government. Undaunted, the bureau began publishing a new journal, *The Second Proletarian News* (*Daini Musansha Shinbun*). An announcement in the first issue stated that it would appear as a legal newspaper of the Japanese Communist Party and would disseminate party policies widely among the workers and peasants. However, it, too, was banned by the government and became another illegal party organ. In March 1932, it was absorbed by *Red Flag*. The bureau was also active on the youth front, publishing both the illegal *Lenin Youth* (*Reinen Seinen*) and the legal *Proletarian Youth*.

The central bureau recognized an improvement in the situation in Japan by expanding its membership organization. At an October 30, 1929, conference at Shimobe spa in Yamanashi Prefecture three men were appointed to the central committee as candidate members and five were made regional organizers.* By the end of the year, according to one estimate, the party had 190 members—100 in Tokyo, 20 in Yokohama, 20 in Osaka-Wakayama, 30 in Kobe, ten in Kyushu, and ten among seamen.⁵⁶ But despite the improved atmosphere, there was constant threat of arrest by the police, and the bureau members generally remained in hiding, moving from one hideout to another in the Osaka area, which was considered safer than Tokyo.

The party's activity and growth during this period must be con-

* The candidate members were Sakinaka, Yamamoto Chuhei, and Saito Takeshi. Yamamoto and Saito were also among the five new organizers, the other three being Yamamoto Kumeki, Abe Yoshimi, and Kato Sadakichi.

sidered remarkable in view of its financial problems. The Comintern did not provide any assistance; consequently, the bureau had to rely almost exclusively upon contributions from sympathizers, who came, for the most part, from academic and cultural circles. According to police records, the central committee was operating on a monthly budget of approximately 3,200 yen.⁵⁷

The Japanese Communist Party underwent another reorganization and review of policies at an extensive central committee meeting held January 12-16, 1930, at Nirigahama in Wakayama Prefecture.⁵⁸ Tanaka Seigen remained chairman of the central committee, whose members were Sano Hiroshi, Maeno, Saito Takeshi, Sakinawa, and Abe Yoshimi. The new slate of officers included four candidate members—Kinoshita Toshiro, Kawasaki Tateo, Yamamoto Kumeki, and Kato Sadakichi. A political secretariat comprised of Tanaka, Sano, and Maeno was formed, and five departments organized under the central committee. They were: organization—Tanaka (chief), Sano, Abe; labor unions—Maeno, Ishidate Kotoei; agitation-propaganda—Sano (chief), Nishiyama Buichi; techniques—Sakinaka (chief), Kinoshita, Omura Einosuke; and publications—Sano (chief), Saito. Saito was also made responsible for youth activities, Maeno for military affairs, Sano for peasant activities, and Abe for women's affairs.⁵⁹

Policy statements by Tanaka on organization, Sano on political action, Maeno and Kawasaki on the labor movement, and Saito on the peasantry revealed no basic changes in party tactics and strategy. Party policy continued to be based primarily on the 1927 theses and the decisions made at the Sixth Comintern Congress in 1928. Capitalism and social democracy were attacked as before, but now there was added an attack upon the economic measures initiated by government and business under the impact of the depression.⁶⁰ Of immediate concern politically was the likelihood that the government would soon call for a general election. In July 1929 Hamaguchi had replaced Tanaka as prime minister, and his cabinet faced the economic problems brought on by worldwide depression. Unrest mounted in Japan. Labor disputes rose sharply in number in 1929, and tenant-farmer demonstrations against high rents were assuming the character of riots.* With the rise in urban unemployment, farm villages were hit

* The number of labor disputes increased from 394 in 1928 to 571 in 1929; the situation became worse in 1930 and 1931, with the number of disputes rising to 900 and 984 in those years (Kishimoto, *Nihon Rodo Seisaku Shoshi*, p. 98). The number of disputes between tenant farmers and landowners increased as follows: 1928, 1,099; 1929, 1,501;

not only by the loss of markets but also by the shift of urban population to the countryside. Conditions in fishing villages were particularly unsettled. Since Hamaguchi's cabinet did not have the support of a majority in the House of Representatives, it was expected that the prime minister would dissolve the Diet and call for a general election.

In November 1929, the communist central bureau had formed a Struggle League for Diet Dissolution (*Gikai Kaisan Toso Domei*) under the leadership of Maeno. The platform of the league centered around the basic objective of establishing a government of workers and peasants through the use of strikes, including a general strike if possible.⁶¹ Maeno and his Zenkyo comrades were evidently ready to pursue a strong direct action policy. At the January 1930 meeting of the central committee, Sano outlined an equally militant party policy for the general election campaign, with the added provision of also supporting the specific economic grievances of workers and peasants.⁶²

Hamaguchi dissolved the Diet a week after the communists' January meeting, calling for a general election on February 20. Faced with the immediate prospect of an election campaign, party leaders found it difficult to agree on policy. Tanaka and Sano advocated a moderate program for election purposes, and evidently removed Maeno from his party posts at a meeting of the political secretariat on February 2.⁶³ They were unable to maintain this position, however; they were carried along by demands for direct action, including the use of violence. These demands were based upon an increasingly optimistic analysis of the intensity of class strife in Japan. *The Second Proletarian News*, for example, described the struggles of peasants and fishermen as armed uprisings, "which now sweep the whole country like a storm," and concluded that "Japan is advancing toward a great social mobilization or to the storm of revolution."⁶⁴

Advice from the Comintern regarding the elections was quite specific, although it is not clear how much influence the Comintern had, particularly since communication between the Japanese party and the Comintern was difficult to maintain during this period. The Comintern declared that the elections would take place in a "situation of increasing economic crisis and of rising revolutionary waves," in which the bourgeoisie and the large landowners would try to use the elections and to mobilize their forces in order "to undertake a hitherto

1930, 1,723; and 1931, 2,231. However, the number of tenants involved did not change greatly (*Nihon Rodo Nenkan 1936*, p. 244). Scalapino points out that "in the light of conditions, tenant disputes were perhaps less in number than might have been expected" (manuscript on the Japanese labor movement).

unprecedented fascist predatory attack on the proletariat and the peasant masses." It urged the Japanese communists to make use of the elections to expose "these fascist-robber plans" and the "social-fascist lie" that a peaceful parliamentary reform of the existing rule was possible; to organize a counterattack for "the revolutionary preparation" of the masses for the overthrow of the monarchy, the capitalists, and the large landowners; to mobilize the workers and peasants into a "revolutionary united front from below" in order to support the struggle for a workers' and peasants' government based on soviets; to struggle against government oppression and against all "pseudo-communist" attempts to liquidate the party or to make it legal; to struggle for the complete independence of Korea, Formosa, and China; and to struggle against "the new imperialist world slaughter that is being prepared," and for the defense of the Soviet Union.⁶⁵

The Comintern was explicit on the subject of tactics to achieve the "revolutionary preparation" of the masses. Its specific suggestions were much more moderate in approach than those of the Japanese party. The Comintern called on the communists to "draw the masses of workers and peasants into the struggle on the basis of their economic daily demands" and from there make the transition to political action. It suggested that party slogans deal with tax reform to benefit workers and peasants, unemployment insurance, higher wages, cancellation of peasants' debts, improved housing, etc., as well as the establishment of political liberties, including extension of suffrage to women and young people. The Comintern reiterated the need to conduct "the united front tactic exclusively from below"; it warned the party not to enter into any agreements with "the reformist and pseudo-communist groupings like the New Labor-Farmer Party," but instead to carry out an "irreconcilable" fight against them. Finally, the party was directed to put up its own candidates for election and to select them from the ranks of political prisoners for propaganda purposes.

The Communist Party was hardly in a position to undertake such an ambitious program. Under the circumstances, it could not play an influential role during the election campaign. Still, working through an Election Struggle League, it managed to nominate nine candidates, including Sano Manabu and Tokuda Kyuichi, who were in jail, and Yamamoto Kenzo, who was in the Soviet Union. However, only one—Ueda Otoichi—actually stood for election. He received 3,039 votes in an unsuccessful race in the second district of Mie Prefecture. Sano, Yamamoto, and Tokuda received a total of 233 write-in votes.⁶⁶

In general, the left-wing parties did not do well in the election. The

four national parties—the Social Democratic Party, the Japan Masses Party, the New Labor-Farmer Party, and the National Democratic Party (Zenkoku Minshuto), a recent offshoot of the Social Democrats—and a number of local parties put up over 90 candidates. Of these, only five were elected, despite a modest increase of 35,000 votes over 1928 in the total proletarian party vote. Two of the successful candidates were from the Social Democratic Party, two were from the Japan Masses Party, and the fifth, from the New Labor-Farmer Party. Hamaguchi's Minseito Party carried the election, winning 273 seats to only 174 for the Seiyukai.

During the election campaign, the Communist Party yielded to pressure to utilize force. Within Zenkyo there were elements that wanted to transform strong words into armed action—to pit “red terror” against “white terror.” This tactical course had been proposed much earlier by Mitamura, who as head of the party's union department before the April 16 arrests, had maintained that strikers should protect themselves against terrorism by organizing self-defense units. These were to be armed and given military training. Mitamura's ultimate expectation was that the self-defense units would develop into a mass armed revolutionary organization based upon factories.⁶⁷ In February 1930 the central committee approved the formation of “red self-defense bodies,” made up largely of Zenkyo members. In Tokyo, 15 squads of from three to five men, armed with knives and pistols, went into the streets to distribute handbills and hang posters, some of which called for “armed strikes, arson, and the destruction of factories,” to incite and intimidate workers and others, and to resist the police, if necessary.⁶⁸

By coming out into the open, the communists of course invited police retaliation. The Tokyo police arrested and interrogated two party activists in early February; on February 24 the Osaka police raided the party's Wakayama hideout and, after a gun battle, caught Maeno, Sakinaka, Kato, Abe, and Tanaka's wife. Tanaka and Sano Hiroshi escaped to Tokyo, but Sano was apprehended there on April 1. There was one arrest after another during the next few months, with the result that the party, Zenkyo, and the Communist Youth League were again decimated.

Despite these blows, the tendency for the communists to resort to violence became stronger, probably because the effective “police terror” and the resulting defeatism among remaining party members made the use of violence appear to be the only course of action left.

One violent incident occurred in April, when Tanaka mobilized Zenkyo members in an attempt to transform a streetcar strike into an attack on the police. The strikers were forced to compromise, however, and though Tanaka's forces found an opportunity to clash openly with the police, more arrests were the only result.

The tendency toward the use of violence reached its climax on May Day. As early as mid-March, Zenkyo began making preparations for a May Day "struggle." Its central committee sent instructions to members that read:

At this difficult time, who is going to defend us—the workers—and literally fight to the death? Only the Communist Party. The Japanese Communist Party has come out into the open . . . and is directing all struggles with the acclamation and overwhelming support of the masses of workers and peasants. . . . We will support it, join its struggles, and fight to the death at the head of the class war until a new day comes for the workers. . . . Only a council of armed workers and peasants led by the death-defying Communist Party and only armed political mass strikes and great demonstrations can eliminate wage cuts, layoffs, and long work hours, and free the workers from a life of slavery. . . . To carry out these tasks, it is absolutely necessary to form red self-defense bodies and factory self-defense bodies.⁶⁹

The provisional Tokyo committee of the Communist Youth League took a similar position in April,⁷⁰ and in an editorial in the April 24 issue of *The Second Proletarian News*, the workers were urged to rise and to "march on the Diet building" on May Day.

The police were ready to meet the threat; they were helped by communist bungling. Because of poor communication, the march on the Diet was a fiasco. The few armed workers who shouted "To the Diet" were easily arrested by the police. In Kawasaki, an industrial center adjacent to Tokyo, the police arrested another group of workers who stormed into the May Day parade armed with revolvers, swords, and bamboo spears.⁷¹ If nothing else, the May Day "uprising" showed how pitifully weak the party and its affiliated organizations were. However, the police made every effort to exaggerate the strength of the party and to play up its use of violence. Therefore, the party suffered two defeats as a result of its May Day program: it was weakened from the standpoint of organization and its public image was further damaged.

The party's central organization was kept alive for a short time through the efforts of Tanaka and two recent Kutobe returnees, Imamoto Bunkichi and Iwao Iesada.⁷² In mid-May they formed a provi-

sional central bureau, which was expanded in July.⁷³ However, within a matter of days, the new central organization was completely shattered by police arrests. Every member of the expanded bureau was taken into custody. The party was left without central leadership and would not have any until much later in the year.

The party leaders had devoted much time in May and June to discussing recent activities. The key figure in these discussions was Iwao Iesada, who had returned from the Soviet Union in April. His views were published in *The Second Proletarian News* in June, and soon became the party position. According to his analysis, as the class struggle became acute, suppression by the ruling classes increased, and the masses of workers and peasants were rapidly revolutionized. Under these circumstances, "impure elements" in the party moved either to the right or to the left. "The policy of arming" and "the policy of the general strike" represented a move to the left. The fundamental error of extreme leftism lay in the absence of an understanding of objective and subjective conditions in Japan and neglect of the need to establish and expand communist organizations. Even though the masses were displaying "a surprising amount of revolutionary energy, initiative, and proletarian heroism," this did not mean that there was an urgent need to call for a general strike or an armed uprising.

Iwao pointed out that the Comintern, at its Tenth Plenum in July 1929, had adopted the slogan "Toward the Factories," and had emphasized the importance of winning over a decisive majority of the working class. Mobilization of the masses, centering around factories, could not be achieved through a handful of armed defense bodies or through armed actions, he asserted. He said, "We are not completely against red terror, if it can bring us advantages," but he insisted that the kinds of terror that had been reported were more harmful than useful. He attributed the origination of the "left-wing deviation" to the loss of leadership suffered by the party, the Communist Youth League, and Zenkyo, and the consequent lack of communist direction for "revolutionary opposition groups." The extreme left-wing elements who had advocated the substitution of small armed groups for masses mobilized from factories, said Iwao, were "intellectuals and petty bourgeois groups who were not experienced in factory life."⁷⁴

In simple terms, what Iwao's article amounted to was criticism of Tanaka for leading the party into "adventurist deviation";⁷⁵ there was general agreement on the need to halt such terrorist activities.⁷⁶ Tanaka, writing much later, admitted that he had acted on his own, with

the cooperation of members of Zenkyo and the Communist Youth League, but he asserted that Tashiro Fumihara, chairman of the party's Tokyo local committee, played a key role in developing the tactics of armed uprising. Tanaka denied any connection with the May Day Kawasaki disturbance, which he called "completely spontaneous."⁷⁷ In 1931, the party's central committee held Tanaka and Sano responsible for what it called "petty bourgeois revolutionarism."⁷⁸ The Comintern also publicly criticized the "left-wing deviation," acting through the West European Bureau of the Profintern and the Young Communist International.⁷⁹

SUPPRESSION OF OTHER LEFT-WING GROUPS

Like the Japanese Communist Party, Zenkyo was hard hit by suppression and was seriously disorganized. In 1930, 201 members of Zenkyo were indicted for violations of the Peace Preservation Law, and attempt after attempt to maintain a stable central organization failed.⁸⁰ Moreover, the few remaining leaders were anything but united. In June 1930, Sato joined Minami Iwao of the Metal Workers Union and Kamiyama Shigeo of the Kanto League of Free Workers to organize a Zenkyo Renovation League (Zenkyo Sashin Domei), or Satsudo, representing approximately one-third of Zenkyo's total membership. They criticized the tactics of "adventurism" and the nearly total identification of Zenkyo policies with those of the Japanese Communist Party. They asserted that Zenkyo was a mass labor organization whose basic objective was the achievement of economic gains, and they decried the acceptance by its "extreme left-wing leadership" of the Communist Party's illegal movement.⁸¹

The Communist Youth League also suffered arrest after arrest. During 1929, 51 members were indicted. Hundreds of league sympathizers were arrested on suspicion, and though they were released, they were kept under surveillance. Gakuren was dissolved in November 1929, leaving the political field free for the Communist Youth League. However, the league continued to lose key personnel through arrests in February, May, and July, 1930.

The situation of the communists in the peasant movement was somewhat better, although this had not been a major focus of communist activity in 1929 and 1930, despite the growth of discontent in the villages. The communist fraction in the National Peasant Union (Zenno), although weakened by the 1928 and 1929 arrests, opposed a

tendency of the union to support the legal socialist parties, especially the Japan Masses Party, and worked to expand its influence through a Council for Making Zenno Militant (Zenno Sentoka Kyogikai), or Senkyo. In April 1930, at the third congress of Zenno, the communist fraction put forward an economic policy based on redistribution of land and a political policy based not on legal parties but on district peasant congresses and committees, worker-peasant meetings, and demonstrations. However, the fraction was not strong enough to influence the central committee decisively, though it was continually represented on the committee. The communists were handicapped by the fact that Zenno had no strong central organization. Because power rested in the hands of district groups, it was difficult, if not impossible, for the communists to work effectively; they did not have the manpower nor could they risk exposure—a danger that was much greater in the countryside than in the cities.⁸²

The lack of close contact with the Comintern created difficulties for the party, whose leaders wanted more than the one-way line of communication afforded by Kutobe returnees. The Zenkyo fraction felt a need for Comintern advice based on an objective evaluation of the situation in Japan. Iizuka Mitsunobu, known more generally by his alias Matsumura Noboru, returned from Kutobe in April 1930 to inform the Japanese party of the forthcoming Fifth Congress of the Profintern, scheduled for July 15 (subsequently postponed until August 15). The idea of sending a Zenkyo delegation quickly caught hold, and a group of five men and two women left for Moscow in July. Among them was Minami Iwao, who was to represent the views of the Zenkyo Renovation League. Konno Yojiro, who was studying in Moscow, was to serve as leader of the group.⁸³ As the Japanese representative on the executive committee of the Profintern, Yamamoto was also to attend. Matsumura, who was arrested and detained briefly by the police in mid-July, returned to Moscow and reported the party's plight to Yamamoto. (It became clear later that Matsumura was a police spy.) Kazama Jokichi, a Kutobe graduate who had entered the Soviet Union in 1925 and who had been in Vladivostok since early in 1930 working with Janson in the Pan Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat, was ordered to return to Moscow to serve as Yamamoto's interpreter. Once again the Japanese communists were looking to their Russian comrades for assistance.

The Struggle for a Firm Strategy and Structure, 1930-1932

At the Fifth Congress of the Profintern, the Russian leaders responded to the request of the Japanese communists for advice by advocating a reexamination of strategy. Lozovsky, in an opening report on conditions in the world labor movement, criticized the Zenkyo Renovation League as an intolerable form of sectarianism. Yamamoto, replying for the Japanese, agreed with Lozovsky and apologized for the errors committed by his comrades in Japan. Minami Iwao understandably tried to explain the reasons for the creation of the Renovation League and was answered by another attack—this one by Janson.¹

Lozovsky ordered the formation of a committee on Japan to consider the problem—the only time that a special committee on Japan was ever established at a Profintern congress.² He chaired the special committee, which included all the Japanese delegates, as well as representatives from China, Korea, and the Eastern divisions of the Profintern and the Comintern. Several important Soviet leaders—Piatnitsky, Radek, Safarov, and Volk—attended sessions from time to time and gave their opinions. The committee not only discussed problems of the Japanese labor movement and ordered the Renovation League dissolved, but also, as might be expected in view of the general situation in Japan, considered revision of basic communist strategy and tactics—a subject ordinarily reserved for decision by the Comintern.³

The revision of communist strategy and tactics in Japan had already been discussed by the Eastern Division of the Comintern. Soon after the fall of Bukharin, Volk and others in the division became determined to revise the 1927 theses, evidently with the support of Safarov.⁴ Iwao and Kazama were informed of the intended revision late in the autumn of 1929. They were told by Volk, who was later accused of being a Trotskyist, that “all problems must be viewed from the standpoint of imperialism.” According to Volk and his colleagues, Bukharin’s theory regarding the stabilization of capitalism was incorrect; capitalism was simply in a period of *temporary* stabilization. It was pointed out that the contradictions of imperialism, the crisis of war,

and the imminence of the internal collapse of the imperialist nations made the stabilization of capitalism impossible. Therefore, if communists considered the situation in Japan from the standpoint of the stabilization of capitalism, they would reach incorrect conclusions regarding strategy and tactics. However, if they considered the situation from the standpoint of the *temporary* stabilization of capitalism, they would conclude correctly that a proletarian revolution would come without a prior bourgeois-democratic revolution. According to Volk, "The Japanese Communist Party is on the right path. That is to say, aided by the Communist International, the party correctly understands the prospects of the revolutionary movement, and, according to its bolshevik line based on bolshevik policy, it is leading the broad masses along the only genuinely popular and revolutionary road of struggle, under the flag of the proletarian revolution and the peasant war for land."⁵ Iwao returned to Japan with Volk's views in April 1930, but he was arrested a few months later.

Without waiting for the Comintern to act, the members of the Profintern committee on Japan took up the task of revising the 1927 theses. The first draft of a resolution, entitled "Tasks of the Revolutionary Labor Unions in Japan," stated that the coming revolution would be a proletarian one. However, when the resolution was about to be adopted by the committee, Piatnitsky (who as chief of the organization bureau of the Comintern was perhaps more conscious than the committee members of the difference between labor unions and the Communist Party) reminded them that the nature of the Japanese revolution should be decided by the Comintern, not the Profintern. The section on the coming revolution was then deleted, although there was no opposition to its content on the part of the Russians or the Japanese.⁶

The resolution on Japan, as finally adopted by the Fifth Congress, could hardly avoid subjects of revolutionary strategy of significance to both labor unions and the party, however. It included scathing attacks on the "renegades" who advocated dissolution of the party and on the "social-fascist agent of capital"—Oyama Ikuo, founder of the New Labor-Farmer Party. Criticism of the left-wing labor union movement was just as bitter. The defects of "right opportunist legalism" and of "left sectarianism" were attacked with equal vehemence. The resolution called upon Zenkyo to halt its internal wrangling, and "to create a powerful revolutionary trade union movement, without which it is impossible to carry on a successful struggle in defense of the in-

terests of the working class, let alone for the overthrow of Japanese imperialists and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.”⁷

After the congress adjourned, the Comintern took steps to reestablish the Japanese Communist Party. Its Eastern Division selected Kazama, who had become converted to the idea that the coming revolution would be a “proletarian one that would include a broad scope of bourgeois-democratic tasks,”⁸ to return to Japan to provide the necessary leadership. It ordered him to act in accordance with the new views on strategy and tactics. This was no doubt the work of Safarov and Volk, who had taken every opportunity to lecture the Japanese delegation on party strategy. Kazama, however, consulted Yamamoto, who qualified the Comintern orders by asking Kazama to seek the advice of the former party leaders in prison; Kazama agreed to do so.⁹

Kazama returned to Japan in November 1930. He made contact with Matsumura and Konno, who had also come back, and with Iwata, who was out of jail temporarily because of illness. These four constituted a new central bureau of the Communist Party that was established in January 1931, with Kazama as chairman. The bureau instituted a membership drive and once again began publication of *Red Flag*. However, the main focus of activity for Kazama and his comrades was to explain the change in strategy and tactics for the party and its affiliated organizations.¹⁰

THE 1931 DRAFT POLITICAL THESES

The first announcement of the new strategy appeared in an appeal to workers and peasants published in *The Second Proletarian News* on January 12.¹¹ The full text reads:

Japan, where the stage of monopoly capitalism has been reached, has a highly centralized industrial organization and a proletariat of five million. The bourgeoisie are completely reactionary. They cannot solve the impending agrarian problem, for to do so would mean overthrowing not only the landlords but themselves as well. The state power of Japan is in the hands of the bourgeois-landlord alliance, which is under the hegemony of finance capital. The agrarian problem can be solved only through a socialist revolution. A successful agrarian revolution is an indispensable condition for the victory of the socialist revolution. *In Japan the prerequisites for a proletarian revolution encompassing a number of bourgeois-democratic tasks are ripening.* At this time, it is completely wrong to seek a “thoroughgoing democratization of the Japanese state.” Accordingly, the

slogan "Diet Dissolution" is wrong. The Japanese Communist Party cancels this slogan today. Instead of Diet dissolution or democratization of the Japanese state, our slogan must be "*Destruction of all bourgeois state machinery and the Diet!*" Instead of "*The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and landlords,*"—"The dictatorship of the proletariat: the overthrow of the bourgeois-landlord government and the establishment of a soviet government of workers and peasants." These slogans must be popularized now through struggles.

Kazama soon began to draft new theses based on the Profintern Fifth Congress resolution and on materials prepared by Safarov and Volk. He had not risked bringing any written materials into Japan, and had to rely upon memory, but he had Konno to assist him. He assigned Iwata the task of preparing a section on the peasantry. Keeping his promise to Yamamoto, he showed an outline of what was to become the lengthy and complex document known as the "draft political theses" to the party leaders in jail, probably by means of a secret channel of communication maintained by Nabeyama's wife.* Kazama purposely used the word "draft" because he was waiting for the opinions of the imprisoned leaders. According to him, despite strong reservations, they accepted the new theses, largely because they regarded the change in strategy as an order from the Comintern.¹² The new theses were published in *Red Flag* in serial form in the April 22, May 17, May 31, and June 15 issues and were later printed in pamphlet form. Meanwhile, Kazama went to Shanghai to

* Durkee states that according to Nabeyama the first attempt to establish contact with communists in and out of prison was made when the communists arrested April 16, 1929, entered prison to await trial. "The conspirators had to find places to exchange messages. Many places were available, such as the exercise area, bathing, barbershop, and even under the tables of prison officials. During an interview with the warden, Nabeyama would stick a small wad of rice paste—with a letter inside—under the table. The next comrade summoned to the office could find the message if he used his wits. In such ways, liaison within the prison was established. A communist was chosen to be in charge of each building, and finally the prison central executive committee was formed. [It included Ichikawa, Sano Manabu, Tokuda, Nabeyama, Sugiura, Kokuryo, Shiga, Takahishi, Nakao, and Mitamura.] Next, the prison central executive committee decided to establish contact with the Communist Party outside prison. For this secret contact work, Nabeyama used his wife, who came to visit him. Mrs. Nabeyama, having been active in the party herself and familiar with illegal methods, took away the dirty clothes of her husband to launder them. In the bundles, she found letters from the communist prisoners, delivered them to the comrades on the outside, and received their answers. Later the messages from the outside were returned to the imprisoned comrades—hidden in food, books, and clothing. Occasionally they were found out, but the contact was never cut. Although Mrs. Nabeyama was sometimes arrested and tortured, she would take up the work again upon her release" (Durkee, pp. 165-67. Based upon an account in Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 134-36. See also Tokuda and Shiga, p. 61).

report to the Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern on the organization of the new central bureau and its activities. He was told that since word of the new policy had already come from Moscow, he should continue with his plans. Anxious for a direct reaction from Moscow, he had already sent Nosaka, who had been released from jail on bail because of poor health, to Russia in March to inform the Comintern that the party would carry out the new theses.¹³ According to Kazama, Nosaka was not opposed to the new strategy.¹⁴

The theses began with an analysis of "The International Situation and the Role of Japanese Imperialism," which reiterated the Comintern judgment that the capitalist world had reached "the peak of intensity" in an economic crisis that was aggravating "the crisis of world capitalism."* The situation was, of course, quite different in the Soviet Union, where the establishment of socialism was advancing "at an impressive rate under the leadership of the Communist Party." According to the theses, socialist development "invited the boundless hatred of the international bourgeoisie and their agents, the social fascists." For this reason, "the imperialist, thieving countries" were uniting in opposition to the Soviet Union, although they were also fighting each other "for a new division of the world because of the intensification of conflicts of interests and contradictions." Citing "The Platform of the Communist International," the theses concluded that "a decisive, major trend in the policies of imperialist countries is the attempt to encircle and then destroy the Soviet Union and to wage a counter-revolutionary war in order to establish the bourgeois rule of terror over the world." According to the theses, Japan was a highly developed imperialist country, and therefore every question regarding revolutionary strategy and tactics had to be viewed "from the standpoint of imperialism."

The political consequences of Japan's economic development were predictable, given the assumption that "ruling status in the economic world guarantees ruling status in politics." The theses proceeded to describe the situation in Japan:

Although the feudal forces, which had to open the way for the development of the capitalist system in order to prevent their own complete destruction in the face of historical inevitability, remained a strong power in the early Meiji years, they were later to see their political influence re-

* The full text of the theses appears as Appendix E, pp. 309-31.

duced as the bourgeoisie increased its economic power and political importance under "clan government" and "bureaucratic administration." However, the forces of the landlords and the bourgeoisie have always agreed and still agree on the policies of imperialist aggression and oppression of workers and farmers. The state power of Japan is in the hands of the bourgeoisie under the hegemony of finance capitalism and the landlords. . . .

The imperial system has now become an instrument for the fascistic oppression and exploitation of the workers and the toiling peasants by the ruling classes led by finance capital. Thus, the fundamental class contradiction in this period is the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Kazama and his colleagues did not, like the Ronoha, deny that the landlords were no longer a political force. They took a theoretical stand on this point similar to that of the 1927 theses, asserting that

It would be a mistake beyond correction to regard production relationships in farm villages in Japan as the same as the relationship between capitalists and workers. . . . It is also a serious error to describe landlords as capitalists and to deny that they have political power as landlords. Those who hold such views do not understand the true character of the agrarian problem in this country. At present landlords occupy a subordinate position with regard to political power, but this is not to deny the fact that they exist as a force.

The new party leaders looked to a socialist revolution to provide a solution to the agrarian problem as one of a number of democratic tasks. According to the theses, the crisis of Japanese capitalism and the contradictions of Japanese society made a socialist revolution inevitable: "There is no way to resolve these contradictions except to replace capitalist dictatorship with proletarian dictatorship."

Crucial to the success of the revolution was the role to be played by the Japanese Communist Party. On this matter, the theses reflected little optimism, saying simply: "The party is too weak to meet the demands." Yet the fact that the Japanese Communist Party was ill-prepared did not mean that it was to be replaced by another party. This point was made quite clear:

The Japanese Communist Party is the sole dynamic force of revolution in Japan today. The greatest efforts of the Japanese proletariat must be concentrated on this point. To refer to "Japanese peculiarities," to hamper the organization of the Communist Party in the name of "historical necessity," or to advocate that a so-called proletarian political party be a pre-

requisite for the organization of the Communist Party prevents the consolidation of the revolutionary power of the proletariat and, consequently, is reactionary, because it postpones indefinitely the victory of the Japanese proletariat.

When it came to suggesting means of strengthening and expanding the Japanese Communist Party, the theses repeated the old tired phrases:

We must organize and lead all the struggles of the mass of workers and poor peasants. For this purpose, the party must arm itself with strict Marxist-Leninist principles—politically, tactically, and organizationally. Since these principles are now embodied internationally in the policies of the Comintern, the party must be organized, not only in form but in substance, as a branch of the Comintern. . . . The party must be organized directly on the basis . . . of factory cells, which provide the very source from which the party can absorb the demands of the masses and grow. . . .

The party must strengthen and expand its organization with a clear view of its task of winning over the majority of the proletariat by independently organizing and directing the economic and political struggles of the working masses. Our slogans are therefore “Into the Masses!” and “Into Large Factories!”

As was to be expected, the theses attacked not only the bourgeoisie, but also the social democrats, or in its words, “social fascists.” The Japanese communists were advised to conduct a decisive struggle against all left-wing parties and groups—a struggle that was indispensable for the unification of the revolutionary forces. However, they were cautioned not to form fractions in the left-wing parties. Instead, they should go directly to the masses in order “to establish a united front based on the class struggle.” The theses contained similar advice for the communists in the labor movement. They should struggle decisively against “extreme-leftist sectarian and the right-wing opportunistic tendencies of the past . . . in order to win over the working masses to the camp of revolution.” The communists should strengthen Zenkyo and secure its right to legal existence; further, they should establish fractions not only in the member unions of Zenkyo but also in the reformist unions like Sodomei, the Seamen’s Union, the National Labor Union League, and the General Federation of Government Enterprise Workers.¹⁵ On this point the theses specified that “activities within reformist unions must be directed toward forming a strong revolutionary opposition and leading the members of that opposition to join the National Council of Japanese

Labor Unions en masse. . . . We must work to win the masses over to the revolutionary camp by supporting the daily, concrete demands of the masses and struggling bravely, and not by formulistic ideologic opposition to reformist labor union leaders."

In brief, the immediate objectives of the Japanese Communist Party in the labor movement were to clarify the communist position of "class against class" and to work to establish a "united front from below based on the idea of class struggle." The theses declared: "This is not something that can be established by discussion or agreement with reformist leaders. It is possible only through the mobilization of the broad mass of workers under the characteristic demands of the revolutionary labor unions."

According to the theses, the Japanese Communist Party also had a crucial role to play in securing a revolutionary alliance of the workers and peasants:

To organize the village proletariat into the National Council of Japanese Labor Unions [Zenkyo] and to organize peasant committees centering around the village proletariat and poor peasants are important and urgent tasks for our party. Our party must not neglect to strengthen and expand the National Congress of Peasant Unions [Zenno Zenkoku Kaigi] as the union of all poor peasants—a merger of all peasant unions—and develop it into a Red Peasant Union.

In order to organize and direct the struggles of the village proletariat and poor peasants and in order to form a close union of the urban proletariat and the mass of poor peasants, the party must vigorously advance definite policies, such as sending urban workers into the villages. Mutual assistance is very important in the case of strikes—for example, the organization of a conference of representatives from labor unions and peasant unions, a liaison conference of factory committees, the organization of a joint-struggle committee, the dispatch of representatives of labor strike bodies to rural villages. In order to secure a revolutionary alliance between workers and peasants and in order to win over workers and peasants to the red flag of the party, the party must carry out concrete policies systematically and purposefully. The consumers' union and the cooperative movement will be able to play a role for this purpose.

All these tasks must accompany the work to establish and expand party cells in the farm villages.

The theses included special instructions relating to "the weak sector of the working class—youth and women." With regard to the Communist Youth League, the advice offered was inconsistent: "The party must form close ties with the Japanese Communist Youth

League, giving the league more attention and direction. However, the league must maintain its complete independence and initiative. In the case of women, the theses called upon the party to struggle for the admission of working women into the labor unions on an equal basis with men in order to win them over to its side, and at the same time, “to assess the particular position held by women and struggle to organize them into special committees (such as women’s committees in factories and conferences of women’s representatives).”

The theses concluded by returning to the opening theme: the party had failed “to popularize” the notion of a link between the problems of the international proletariat and the political problems of the Japanese proletariat. The theses emphasized that “the greatest international issue for the Communist Party is to organize an effective struggle against a second war of imperialism, and to link it with the struggle for the support of the Soviet Union and positive support of and liaison with the Chinese revolution and the revolutionary movements in Korea and Taiwan.”

Kazama and his collaborators were conscious of a need to explain the shift in strategy from the 1927 theses. They did so in the June 15 issue of *Red Flag*—the issue containing the last installment of the text of the theses. In an “Appeal to the Revolutionary Workers on the Occasion of Publishing the Political Theses (Draft),” the new central bureau explained that the 1927 theses had provided the Japanese Communist Party “with a great guiding power for overcoming the dissolutionist deviations—Yamakawaism and Fukumotoism—existing in it and for popularizing the party.” But, according to the appeal,

Underlying them was an error in the assessment of the present condition of Japanese capitalism. The decisions made at the Sixth Comintern Congress of 1928 and of the Tenth Plenum of 1929 required modification and revision of the July [1927] theses. The matter has been discussed both in our party and by the international leadership. Although we were unable to change the whole of the theses, we have been moving toward correcting errors in them through the use of concrete tactics. The Comintern’s instructions regarding the general election of February 1930 was an explicit, specific example of this.¹⁶

THE COMINTERN AND THE SHIFT IN STRATEGY

The new definition of the nature of the coming revolution in Japan was the result of changes in Comintern thinking that had developed

since 1928. The new school of thought was a natural, almost logical outgrowth of the tortuous and ambiguous definition of Japanese state power in the 1927 theses. That document defined the coming revolution in Japan as a bourgeois-democratic one that was required because of the existence of feudal institutional remnants in the structure of state power and of increasing agrarian problems. At the same time, the 1927 theses held that modern Japan was ruled by a bloc of capitalists and large landlords—"a bloc in which hegemony was in the hands of the former, or capitalists"—and that, further, "the bourgeoisie has already seized power and is making use of the entire state structure, with all its feudal appendages and remnants, for the organization and defense of capitalist exploitation." These points obviously contradicted each other, because if power in Japan had already been seized by the bourgeoisie, the coming revolution would have to be a socialist one. The institutional remnants of feudalism would thereby be of secondary importance.

The tendency to emphasize the bourgeois nature of state power in Japan grew stronger after the Sixth Comintern Congress in 1928, where the Comintern formulated a revolutionary typology for the nations of the world. Japan was not included among the advanced capitalist countries in which proletarian revolution was imminent. Nor was it grouped with Poland, Hungary, and Bulgaria, where proletarian revolutions would carry out a number of bourgeois-democratic tasks. Japan had been coupled with Spain, and was assigned a bourgeois-democratic revolution that might fairly rapidly change into a "proletarian-socialist" revolution. The Comintern leaders had to face the fact that capitalism was more highly developed in Japan than in any of these countries, however. They tended therefore to accept the possibility of a socialist revolution for Japan without the necessary preliminary stage of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. This tendency was given momentum by the growing criticism of Bukharin, who had been responsible for drafting the 1927 theses. In 1929 and 1930, Comintern and Profintern analyses of the situation in Japan and instructions based on them indicate that greater weight was being given to the forces of capitalism. It is relatively easy to view Comintern instructions on the February 1930 elections as pointing to a socialist revolution that would include in its scope the destruction of feudal remnants.

Volk, who was increasingly influential in the Eastern Division of the Comintern during this period, wanted to be as explicit as possible regarding strategy for the Japanese Communist Party. In his "Theses

on the Urgent Tasks of the Japanese Communist Party,” written in 1930, he was clear and to the point regarding the nature of state power in Japan, declaring:

Despite the diversity of economic organizations and the high degree of landlordism in agriculture, Japan is, oddly enough, a developed capitalist country. The ruling and decisive force of contemporary Japan is monopoly capitalism or imperialism. . . . All the wealthy classes of Japan—the urban and rural bourgeoisie, the exploiting groups of capitalists and landlords—have been united under the leadership of the finance capitalists dominating the country. . . . The absolutist structure of the Japanese state in no way weakens the power of the financial oligarchy. The absolutist, reactionary Japanese bourgeoisie has maintained the old forms of the imperial system as a means of concentrating power and pressure against the workers. . . . All these conditions help the Japanese bourgeoisie to create a fascist, absolutist illusion as well as a parliamentary illusion and to make use of both among the masses. . . . The further development of fascism is the fundamental trend, supported by the Japanese exploiting classes and their government. They have established fascist mass organizations and are carrying out, with all their power, the continued fascistization of government.¹⁷

As noted earlier, Volk recognized that the party was leading “the broad masses along the genuinely popular and revolutionary road of struggle, under the flag of the proletarian revolution and the peasant war for land.”

The Japanese Communist Party later charged that the shift in strategy should be attributed directly to the influence of Trotskyists like Volk.* Although there well may be some truth in this charge, a broader interpretation, which does not overlook the contribution of Volk, is more satisfactory. Two key considerations are involved. First, this was a period of confusion in the Comintern with regard to ideas and policies. Bukharin had fallen, and Stalin was still working to consolidate his power; differences of opinion regarding revolutionary strategy were common. Second, there was the persistent paradox of placing Japan in the bourgeois-democratic stage of revolution when Japanese capitalism was highly developed and was threatening a war against the “fatherland of the proletariat.”

* A semi-official party history reads: “When the Japanese Communist Party became engaged in controversies with the Ronoha, a group of foreign Trotskyists aided their counterparts in Japan. That is, the ‘Far East hands’ in Moscow suggested that the Japanese Communist Party change its strategy. These ‘old hands’ took the same view of Japanese capitalism as the Ronoha. They maintained that the Japanese revolution ‘must be a proletarian revolution.’ What was the purpose of this new policy? It was to direct the revolutionary force of Japan not against the imperial system but against the capitalist

REACTION OF THE JAILED LEADERS

Kazama's account of the reaction of the jailed communist leaders to the new theses requires substantial emendation. The change in strategy was a great shock to the former leaders, who had come to believe in the infallibility of the 1927 theses. Although they formally expressed to Kazama their satisfaction with the new theses, they also made clear some objections. They asked that the draft remain open to further discussion and that it not be printed in pamphlet form for distribution outside the party. They refused to accept the premise that the 1927 theses erred in the analysis of Japanese capitalism.¹⁸ First, they held that the 1927 theses had continued to be endorsed by the Comintern's executive committee, and that to denounce the 1927 theses because of Bukharin's role in drafting them would be "a petty bourgeois academic act in complete defiance of international organization and authority." They argued that the 1927 theses were formulated on the basis of materials that were entirely adequate for the analysis of Japanese society up to 1926 and constituted the best expression of party experience in the revolutionary struggle. They noted that Stalin himself had participated in the drafting. They asserted, moreover, that the Comintern was infallible, and that, consequently, it would be anti-Comintern to declare that its policy was in error. They also claimed it would be contrary to the truth to assert that decisions made at the Sixth Comintern Congress and the Tenth Plenum required that the 1927 theses be altered. Second, the imprisoned leaders pointed out that the 1927 theses had been the party's program and that they were to be tried by the government because of their advocacy of that program. They asked that the party not discredit their leadership, but rather try to emphasize the historical significance of the 1927 theses. They also warned that criticism of the theses would strengthen the position of the dissolutionists led by Mizuno and his collaborators; to join the dissolutionists' attack upon the 1927 theses might be a step in the direction of compromise with them.

The leaders proposed an approach that amounted to a kind of compromise. They were willing to acknowledge that blind adherence to

class, thereby avoiding the inevitable stage of bourgeois-democratic revolution. . . . However, if the imperial system remains, the [proletarian] revolution is bound to fail. The imperial system will then remain as firm as a rock. This is the policy of the Trotskyist group" (see *Nihon Kakumei*, p. 15).

every detail of any given theses might be reactionary; theses had to be developed constantly. At the same time, they insisted on a need to learn from the revolutionary tradition of the Communist Party and to act in that tradition; otherwise, it would be impossible to relate the past to later conditions. They suggested that the “error” of the 1927 theses with respect to Japanese capitalism be treated from the standpoint of changes in objective conditions in the period from 1926 to 1931. They were willing to concede that the 1927 theses might no longer be applicable, but not that they had been wrong. The ex-leaders swore their absolute loyalty to the new leadership and promised not to express any opposing view publicly. In return, they asked the new leaders not to misuse revolutionary self-criticism and to withdraw any charge of error—not for the sake of convenience, but on the basis of principle.

Kazama and the small group around him were not deterred from their course by the advice of the former party leaders. They made their position absolutely clear in an article in the November 1, 1931, issue of *Red Flag* signed “Senbanko” (lathe man), probably Kazama himself. While acknowledging the historical role of the 1927 theses, the author refused to recognize that the strategy based upon the theses had been correct: “Even at the time of the drafting of the 1927 theses, the present definition of the proletarian revolution including a wide scope of bourgeois-democratic tasks was correct, whereas that of a rapid transformation of a bourgeois-democratic revolution into a proletarian revolution was not.” Yet there must have been some misgivings, however slight, for the author, while outlining the change in policy from the Comintern’s Sixth Congress to the Profintern’s Fifth Congress, admitted that the Comintern itself had not made “any clear announcement” regarding the shift, and concluded that it was “imperative to report to the Comintern immediately to receive decisive instruction on the matter.”¹⁹

While the communist leaders in jail were forced to accept the new theses, their old adversaries—the Ronoha—rejoiced at the shift.* Inomata, despite the criticism directed at the Ronoha, was especially delighted, since he maintained that the Comintern’s categorization

* Inamura, who had been expelled from the Japanese Communist Party in 1929 for dissolutionism, commented on the significance of the shift with respect to the Ronoha: “[The party leaders] have surrendered to the strategy of those to whom they used to apply abusive terms like ‘opportunists’ and ‘left-wing social democrats’” (Inamura, p. 117; see also Kadoya).

of countries and types of revolution supported his interpretation of the 1927 theses. He had not accepted the Communist Party's interpretation that "government of workers and peasants" meant "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry," as was the case for less advanced countries. He believed instead that such language meant a dictatorship of the proletariat, which could be achieved without passing through the intermediate phase of a democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants.²⁰ After reading the January 12th appeal, he wrote: "This restatement can never be considered a revision of the July theses, which should have been interpreted in this sense in the first place."²¹

Although the "draft political theses" (the 1931 theses) removed theoretical differences in strategy that had divided the Japanese Communist Party and the Ronoha, this did not mean that a rapprochement was in the offing. The gap between the two groups remained wide, particularly on matters of organization and tactics. In any case, it is somewhat unrealistic to continue to consider the Ronoha a political group. Most of its original members had gone their own way. Some, like Inomata, had become increasingly engaged in academic pursuits; others retired from public life. Yamakawa, for example, settled on a farm in Kamakura.

LABOR, PEASANT, AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

One of the major tasks of the party, aside from "popularizing" the new strategy, was to rebuild its organization in order to expand its influence in the labor movement. This task was made easier by the dissolution of the Renovation League in November 1930, although factionalism in Zenkyo was not completely overcome. Party leaders hoped to build on those factory cells that had continued to be active, despite the repeated decimation of the central committee.²² By March 1931 they had succeeded in reestablishing local committees in Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, and Kobe, and were hopeful that the party's membership could be rapidly expanded.²³ The police remained intent upon suppressing the party. As it grew through the activities of 16 local committees, the police countered with one series of arrests after another. Between January and November, 1931, the police arrested over 8,700 persons; 314 were indicted, including 121 party members, 27 Communist Youth League members, and 166 fellow travelers.²⁴

The Communist Party and Zenkyo began to implement labor pol-

icies suggested by the Profintern.²⁵ Through *Red Flag* and *Labor News*, the leaders of the party and the union acknowledged that the strike movement in Japan was weak because the left wing had failed to direct the economic struggles of the Japanese proletariat correctly. They stated: "We must understand that the most vital tasks in winning over a majority of the workers to the Communist Party are to explain the political nature of economic struggles and to prepare, organize, and direct those struggles."²⁶ During the next few months, the Zenkyo fraction concentrated its efforts upon establishing cells in large and important factories and upon being less obviously connected with the instigation and direction of strikes. With the mass support of workers, it hoped to achieve legal status for Zenkyo. The Communist Party leaders, on their part, tried to check the tendency to confuse party and union matters, but were unable to do so because they could not always resist the temptation to resort to more militant, revolutionary action.²⁷

The immediate communist goal in the labor movement remained much the same as before: to attain hegemony in it by supplanting the moderate leadership. To achieve this end, the communists sought to expand their influence among workers through strikes. The implementation of this policy involved Zenkyo in a number of strikes in the late winter and early spring. Zenkyo exerted some influence in a strike in February at the Shibaura Electric Company, one of the largest factories in the Tokyo area, but could not wrest the leadership from the moderates. On International Anti-Unemployment Day, February 25, Zenkyo mobilized some 1,000 workers in a demonstration in one of Tokyo's industrial districts; the police arrested approximately 200 of them. The Zenkyo fraction also strove to influence the determination of union leadership. Its only noteworthy success was a swing to the left of the Tokyo Transportation Workers Union (Tokyo Kotsu Rodo Kumiai) as a result of a victory of the "revolutionary opposition" in the union's April election. To the communists, this was an indication that reformist leaders were being rejected by the union rank and file because of their repeated "betrayal" of the workers during strikes, and that trust in the revolutionary leadership of the labor movement was growing.²⁸ The communists were also encouraged by the growth in Zenkyo membership. According to the police, the number of union members was 2,500 in July 1930 and over 10,000 in June 1931. This remarkable increase was a result of the impact of economic depression and the willingness of more workers to follow militant leaders.²⁹

The communists planned to test the "revolutionary tendency" of the labor movement in May Day struggles in the large cities throughout Japan.³⁰ The Zenkyo fraction organized groups of 30 workers to join government-authorized parades or to demonstrate independently. Depending upon circumstances, these groups were either to divert authorized marches to advance on government buildings or to join together to form a large independent demonstration. The police were on the alert, however. Group leaders and messengers were arrested by the hundreds before any kind of agitation could get under way. In Tokyo alone, some 350 men were seized by the police.³¹ The Communist Party admitted the failure of the 1931 May Day struggles, but it claimed success in organizing its own demonstrations.³²

The Japanese Communist Party also expanded its organizational efforts in the peasant movement. "Properly appreciating the importance of an agrarian revolution and the revolutionary energy of poor peasants in Japan's proletarian revolution," the party was expected, under the 1931 theses, to organize the rural proletariat into Zenkyo and to form peasant committees centering around poor peasants. To accomplish these objectives, the party established cells in the rural areas and strengthened fractional influence in peasant organizations, especially Zenno, whose membership was made up primarily of poor peasants. However, it withdrew its support of Senkyo (the Council for Making Zenno Militant) on the ground that its policies would have the effect of splitting Zenno. The communists acknowledged that Zenno's leadership was still largely social democratic, but they preferred to continue to fight social democrats from within that body instead of from the outside.³³ However, this tactic was not practicable because the right wing insisted that Zenno support the legal proletarian parties. The fourth convention of Zenno, convened in March 1931, found the right wing still in command and the communists ready to form a new organization.

On instructions from the party's peasant department, the communists secretly formed the Zenno National Congress (Zenno Zenkoku Kaigi) to "represent the interests of poor peasants throughout the country," and began publication of *Farmer News* (*Nomin Shinbun*). This split represented a defeat for the communists, because it increased the gap between them and the left wing of the peasant movement. As in the case of Zenkyo, it also left them more exposed. By January 1932 the Zenno National Congress had its own headquarters and national committee to work directly for the creation of a "revolu-

tionary peasant front." The congress called for ultimate state ownership of all land and advocated the use of such illegal methods as riots and refusal to pay taxes.³⁴ Under party orders, the congress sought to influence the federation from which it had split, as well as other moderate peasant groups like the new All-Japan Peasant Union and the social democratic General Federation of Japanese Peasant Unions.³⁵

The Zenno National Congress membership probably reached its peak in 1932, when, according to Japanese government figures, it totaled more than 25,000. However, its strength declined quickly in the following year, after its communist leaders were arrested. Some 137 congress leaders were arrested in 1933, and another 28 in the following year. The government, satisfied that the "level of political consciousness" of the remaining leaders was substantially lower, regarded the congress as "of little danger."³⁶

Communists were also increasingly active in the so-called proletarian cultural movement through their dominance of the All-Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts (Zen Nihon Musansha Geijutsu Renmei), more commonly known as NAPF from its Esperanto title. The proletarian cultural movement had its origin in the Japan Proletarian Literary Arts League (Nihon Puroretaria Bungei Renmei), an organization centering around *Literary Arts Front* (*Bungei Sensen*), which began publication some six months after the 1923 earthquake. The league, which was formally established in December 1925, was the first joint effort of the left-wing literary groups; it paved the way for cooperation between writers and other artists on one hand, and the left-wing party and labor movements on the other. By the end of 1927, following disputes with the social democrats and the Ronoha, the communists split off from the league. Shortly thereafter they helped form NAPF, and began publication of *Battle Flag* (*Senki*) to propagate Marxism-Leninism to counter the "social democratic" line of *Literary Arts Front*. The situation was not satisfactory from the communist point of view, however, largely because most of the groups affiliated with NAPF were loose organizations of artists and intellectuals that retained the nature of study and discussion clubs.

The communists were anxious to "bolshevize" the NAPF affiliates and to bring more such groups under their influence. Kurahara Korehito, a leading communist literary critic, directed the Communist Party's efforts to achieve these ends. After attending the Fifth Profintern Congress, where he served as interpreter for the Japanese delegation, he returned to Japan in March 1931, bringing with him a resolu-

tion passed by the congress on "The Role and Tasks of the Proletarian Culture and Educational System." On the basis of this resolution, he called for "proletarian realism" on the part of Japan's writers and artists. In an article in the June 1931 issue of *Battle Flag* entitled "Organizational Problems of the Proletarian Art Movement," he proposed that literature and art be devoted to political subjects, and urged that the various cultural fields unite under this principle. Proletarian literature and art were to be part of the political class struggle. He called for the development of a people's art, based upon life in factories and villages. Kurahara formed a cultural fraction that spearheaded a plan to establish a broader union of cultural organizations. His efforts culminated in the establishment in November 1931 of the Japan Proletarian Culture Federation (Nihon Puroretaria Bunka Renmei), or KOPF, which included organizations in the fields of literature, theater, art, motion pictures, music, photography, science, library, education, birth control, atheism, and Esperanto.³⁷

The primary objectives of KOPF were to spread communist ideas among cultural circles and to strengthen the ties between those circles and the international communist movement. However, the federation's leaders were forced to play an ever-expanding role as political agents. Intellectuals working in the cultural movement were increasingly engaged in illegal party activities with two results: they tended to isolate themselves from any mass support, and they invited retaliation by the police. Thus, for example, when KOPF staged a campaign to support a communist-sponsored candidate, Yoshida Yoshiichi, in the February 1932 general election, the police responded by arresting most of the communist fraction in March and some 180 members in June. After that, the KOPF leadership went underground, although member organizations continued to carry on their activities openly for another year.³⁸

The Communist Youth League did not fare any better than the other party-dominated organizations in this period. Konno took the lead in January 1931 in reconstructing the central organization of the league and in establishing cells in universities and technical schools, but as organizational activity and agitation increased, the police were quick to intervene. The familiar pattern of mass arrests followed in November 1931 and continued throughout 1932.³⁹ No continuity of leadership could be maintained under these circumstances. Individual members participated in strikes and in peasant disputes, or agitated against military training, but the league itself was unable to consolidate an organizational framework based on mass support.

THE PUBLIC TRIAL OF THE COMMUNISTS

The spring and summer of 1931 was a time of great tension in Japan. The system of party government that had evolved over the past decade was tottering. Prime Minister Wakatsuki, who had assumed office after Hamaguchi's resignation in March 1931, did not appear to be able to cope with economic and foreign policy problems. The depression had worsened, and the campaign that the Chinese Nationalists had been carrying on against Japan in Manchuria grew in intensity. Right-wing nationalist groups were increasingly active in Japan both in public and behind the scenes, proposing drastic measures as solutions to the country's problems. They were particularly influential in military circles among officers of all ranks. Rumors that the army was ready to take direct political action were common—and well-founded. The army came close to attempting a coup in March 1931, but abandoned the plot when three senior officers withdrew their support. Rumors of an impending showdown in Manchuria were even more common. "Settlement of all issues, by force if necessary" became a popular slogan. Adding to the tension in Japan was the public trial of the Japanese communists, which began on June 25. Faced with certain conviction and possible death sentences, party leaders refused to defend themselves against the charge of attempting to overthrow the existing form of government. Instead, they were determined to use the trial for propaganda purposes.

While in jail, the communists had undergone lengthy preliminary examinations, and some of them, notably Sano Manabu, Nabeyama, Tokuda, Shiga, Mitamura, and Takahashi Sadaki, had talked of party matters at great length. By the time of the trial, the authorities had obtained from the communists themselves all the evidence necessary to obtain convictions. It is difficult to explain why the communists talked so fully to the police. Personal differences and rivalries seem to be one important reason. In addition, some of the communists had a strong desire to set the record straight. Tokuda later criticized Sano and Nabeyama for cooperating with the police in order to get out of prison as soon as possible; he also criticized Mitamura for disclosing details of party discord in order to show that the party was weak and impotent.⁴⁰ According to Shiga, Sano thought that with his own arrest the entire party had been destroyed, and consequently, was ready to tell everything as an act of self-criticism to stimulate efforts to reconstruct the party. In Shiga's view, this action, far from protecting the

party, helped to destroy it. He asserted that "such self-criticism was permissible only among friends, not enemies."⁴¹ Sano's actions prompted Tokuda and Shiga to tell their own story.* Sano later explained that he had hoped the propaganda emanating from the courtroom would help the party to grow. He admitted, however, that he was already beginning to doubt the wisdom of working with the Comintern. In his words,

My national feeling grew stronger and stronger in Shanghai, but as a believer in internationalism, I suppressed it. After I was arrested in Shanghai in June 1929, this feeling disappeared. . . . I felt that even if I were to be sentenced to death, I would try to expand the Communist Party as much as possible from prison, encourage the comrades outside of prison, and propagandize during the public trial. Although I sometimes felt disillusioned about Soviet Russia and the Comintern, I forced myself to shut my eyes to any shortcomings and did my best to develop the Communist Party, hoping that something good would come out of it.⁴²

Despite their differences, the communist leaders in jail were able to present a defiant united front with respect to the conduct of the trial. Since they were determined to use the trial for propaganda purposes, they had to make certain that the trial would be open to the public. In the past, the authorities had held closed trials in order to avoid publicizing the communist program and any discussion of the abolition of the imperial system. Mindful of the government's attitude, the "prison central executive committee," in a meeting with the presiding judge, Miyagi Minoru, and the prosecutors in October 1930, made the following demands: (1) that the more than 250 defendants be given a single unified trial; (2) that the trial be held during regular court sessions; (3) that the trial be open to the public; (4) that party spokesmen be permitted to make speeches covering certain specified subjects at the trial's opening; (5) that the defendants be allowed to form a trial committee that would carry on negotiations with the court and be responsible for all the defendants and the procedure of the trial (the latter in order to guarantee freedom of speech); (6) that those in prison be released on bail immediately; (7) that the prison central executive committee members be permitted to appear as witnesses in

* Tokuda wrote: "We felt so tortured by the fact that our party was damaged that we started to make mistakes. We should only have disclosed the policy of our party; there was no need to speak about party organization to the enemy, nor should we have. However, because Sano and others had discussed organization, we, too, made the mistake of doing so. As Shiga and I began to talk, the others said, 'Tokuda and Shiga have begun to talk, so we need not keep quiet.' In order to offset the mistakes and betrayals [of Sano and the others], I myself made a mistake. I still regret this mistake" (Tokuda and Shiga, pp. 58-59). Fukumoto says much the same thing (*Kakumei Undo Razo*, p. 141).

trials in other districts; and (8) that the defendants be allowed to bring notes and reference materials into the courtroom.⁴³

The prosecution was flatly opposed to these demands. The communists, however, threatened to go on a hunger strike if the trial was not made public. Finally, over the protests of the prosecution, the communists negotiated a compromise agreement with the court in early April 1931. There would be a single trial, with the defendants to be tried in groups of 20; the prison central executive committee would participate not only in its own trial, but also in those of the succeeding defendants; the defendants would be permitted to confer prior to the opening of the trial; and before the examination of individual defendants, members of the prison central executive committee would be permitted to make statements in order to make clear the party's policies and objectives.⁴⁴

Judge Miyagi was largely responsible for effecting the compromise agreement. A scholarly jurist who had carefully immersed himself in the study of communism, he evidently wanted the public to have a clear understanding of Marxism-Leninism and the nature of the communist movement in Japan. During the trial, he strove through his questioning of the accused to bring out as clearly as possible the objectives of the communists and the relationship of the party to the Comintern, while trying to avoid references to the emperor and the imperial system.⁴⁵ To the extent that the communists wanted to make clear the nature and purposes of their movement, he had their cooperation. Judge Miyagi threatened to close the trial to the public if the accused attempted to use the court as a forum for propaganda about party principles, especially those referring to the emperor, but despite extreme provocation,* he did not carry out this threat.⁴⁶

The Communist Party, under Kazama's leadership, planned to co-

* The following exchange is cited in Durkee (p. 174):

JUDGE: You must not tell about the contents of the 1927 theses. You are not permitted to talk about the contents in public.

ICHIKAWA: I want to explain the meaning of the 1927 theses. In explaining the meaning I must touch upon the contents.

JUDGE: If you talk about the contents, there will be trouble.

ICHIKAWA: The 1927 theses have been published. Even the cruel bourgeois government has permitted their publication.

JUDGE: However, you are using the censored portions. . . .

(Ichikawa proceeds to discuss the July theses.)

JUDGE: Stop your explanation!

ICHIKAWA (continuing): The proletarian revolution is the goal of the proletariat. . . .

JUDGE: Will you stop this? If you do not keep quiet, I will close this trial to the public. Ignoring the judge, Ichikawa continued discussing the 1927 theses (*Puroretaria Kagaku*, Special Edition, November 1931; see also Suzuki Takeshi, p. 125, and Yamamoto and Arita, p. 324).

ordinate mass protests with the struggle in court. The communists hoped that the trial and the agitation together would demonstrate that their party was the only genuine party of the masses and would thus encourage substantial expansion of its membership.⁴⁷ Kazama and his comrades hired the defense lawyers (led by the well-known Fuse Tatsuji) and did their best to create public support for the defendants. On several occasions, *The Second Proletarian News* appealed for a popular campaign to rescue them from jail.⁴⁸ As was to be expected, the Comintern also rallied to the side of the defendants. It accused the Japanese government of unprecedented cruelty against them and called upon the Japanese masses to rally to the defense of their "true leaders."⁴⁹

The trial began amid great excitement and apprehension. Long lines of anxious spectators waited to gain admission to the courtroom. Several hundred policemen kept close watch to prevent possible demonstrations. The communist defendants had hoped for just such a situation to reinforce their propaganda struggle. It was an auspicious opening for a drama that was to play on for over a year. A demonstration planned by the communists for June 25 was averted when the police arrested 30 prospective participants. Several weeks later Zenkyo elements planned to demonstrate and attack the prison where the defendants were incarcerated. The police learned about this scheme and arrested over 90 persons.⁵⁰

Sano Manabu set the tone for the trial in his opening statement. He declared that the Communist Party was the vanguard of the working class and that it "arose inevitably from the conflict between classes." He declared that there was only one Communist Party in Japan—the Japanese section of the Comintern—and that anyone claiming to be a communist who was not a member of the party was not a genuine communist. He protested strongly against the "inhuman treatment" meted out to the prisoners by the authorities, who regarded them as "ordinary criminals." The defendants were, according to Sano, "political class criminals." He expanded this point: "Our struggle is against political power. That struggle is honorable. However, we are not receiving treatment as honorable political criminals. . . . We demand such treatment."⁵¹

After Sano's opening statement, the communist leaders made individual statements on subjects that had been assigned to them: party policy in general, Sano; party organization, Nabeyama; party history, Ichikawa Shoichi; labor union policy, Sugiura and Kokuryo; agrarian

policy, Takahashi Sadaki and Shiga; youth policy, Tokuda; criticism of the dissolutionists, Sugiura and Shiga; and denunciation of the Peace Preservation Law, Mitamura. Sano then made a concluding statement. These statements were directed not to the court but to Japan's workers and peasants. Ignoring the objections of the judge and the prosecutors, the defendants poured out the most blatant propaganda. The party managed to record the proceedings and published large sections of them. Ichikawa's statement was published in full in book form and ultimately became the official party history.⁵² Never had the party received so much publicity.

The outbreak of hostilities in Manchuria on September 18, 1931, had a great impact upon the trial. For several months party organs had been warning about a Japanese war of imperialism against the Chinese revolution and against the Soviet Union.⁵³ The defendants postponed their propaganda efforts for the time being and used the trial to oppose the war. Judge Miyagi tried to stop them, but failed. The communists took advantage of every opportunity to appeal to the public to oppose the sending of troops into Manchuria. In prison, they loudly discussed the matter. Their guards grew nervous and edgy, and inevitably resorted to the use of force.* The communists, however, did not stop their disruptive tactics.⁵⁴

Although the communists had their day in court, the trial was ultimately brought to a conclusion on October 29, 1932. Most of the seats in the courtroom were filled with nationalistic, right-wing elements. The police guard was increased. Some communists were bold enough to distribute handbills in the court building against capital punishment or long sentences. All of the party leaders except Mitamura were given the sentences that the prosecution had demanded; in his case, the death penalty had been sought. He, Sano Manabu, Ichikawa, and Nabeyama were given life sentences; Takahashi Sadaki and Kokuryo were sentenced to 15 years imprisonment, Sunama to 12 years, and Tokuda, Sugiura, Nakao, Shiga, Fukumoto, Karasawa Seihachi, Soma, Kawada, Matsuo, and Ito Tamotsu, to ten years.⁵⁵ The other communist defendants were tried in separate groups; many were

* Writes Durkee: "On one such occasion, Nabeyama was badly beaten up by the guards. The next day when he appeared in court with his bruised and beaten face, his lawyers protested, and the newspapers played it up. Such brutality had often occurred in Japanese prisons, but because this instance was publicized, the violence ceased. The communist prisoners did not stop their disruptive tactics, however. On certain commemorative days . . . they demonstrated in their cells. If the authorities attempted to suppress their outbursts with violence, the communists threatened to tell about it in the trial" (Durkee, p. 175).

sentenced to jail; some were released for lack of evidence. (Some of the communists appealed; the final decision was made in April 1934, when the supreme court refused the appeals.)⁵⁶

Kazama, meanwhile, endeavored to strengthen the party's central organization. By September 1931, when hostilities broke out in Manchuria, he had taken the lead in forming a new central committee and eight functional departments. Kazama was the chairman of the central committee, which included Iwata, Konno, Shirakawa Yoshimatsu (of the Kobe local committee), Miyagawa Torao (Tokyo local committee), and Tai Tameshichi and Mizogami Yakuma (both Zenkyo). Kishi Masaru (Kansai regional committee) and Isozaki Iwao were candidate members. The department officers were: Kazama and Konno, organization; Kazama and Mizogami, labor unions; Iwata and Isozaki, peasants; Konno, youth; Kodama Shizuko, women; Iwata, agitation-propaganda; Kazama, Iwata, and Konno, publications; and Kazama and Ishida Kyoze, techniques and funds.⁵⁷

Like their comrades in court, the party leaders made their position on the aggression in Manchuria clear. They proclaimed in *Red Flag*:

The bourgeois newspapers and magazines unanimously find the "causes" of the present war in the "violence" and "scornful attitude toward Japan" of Chinese soldiers and in the partial destruction of the Manchurian railway. However, this is completely false. The real cause lies in the fact that the Japanese imperialists have been preparing a war of territorial plunder in order to extricate themselves from the crisis with which they are confronted at home. The action that the Japanese military clique took under instructions from the financial bourgeoisie did not come about all at once. . . . It is an act of imperialism and the beginning of armed intervention in the Soviet Union. . . . We must fight against bourgeois patriotism and chauvinism, which are rooted deeply among Japanese workers, and strive for the independence of colonies and semicolonies. We must transform the war of imperialism that will intensify the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie into a civil war in order to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.⁵⁸

This view of the aggression in Manchuria was in complete accord with the interpretation of state power in the 1931 theses: the aggression was the act of the bourgeoisie, which was using the military as its instrument. Thus, the political goal of the communist movement—the only genuine revolutionary movement—became the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This view was neat and orderly, but it left the communists increasingly isolated. It led them to brand all socialists "social fascists"

at a time when a proposal for cooperation in an antiwar movement would probably have been a more effective approach than the brave slogans provided by the communists.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROLETARIAN PARTY MOVEMENT

Two national legal proletarian parties existed at this time—the Social Democratic Party, with over 63,000 members, and a new National Labor-Farmer Masses Party (*Zenkoku Rono Taishuto*) with a membership of some 60,000.⁵⁹ The new party had emerged as the result of the amalgamation of several parties—an amalgamation that began in July 1930, after the general election had demonstrated the consequences of proletarian disunity. At that time, the Japan Masses Party, the National Democratic Party, the Tokyo Proletarian Party, and ten local parties formed a centrist National Masses Party (*Zenkoku Taishuto*).⁶⁰ The new party attempted to bring about a merger with the two remaining major proletarian parties—the Social Democratic Party and the New Labor-Farmer Party. However, a majority of the Social Democratic Party leaders opposed any kind of association with the New Labor-Farmer Party, though they were willing to amalgamate with the National Masses Party. In July 1931, a splinter group of the Social Democratic Party joined with the other two parties to establish the National Labor-Farmer Masses Party.⁶¹ Like its centrist predecessors, the new party, despite its criticism of the left and the right, wanted to be the heart of an all-inclusive united front.* (Meanwhile, the trade unions that had previously supported the separate parties, including dissident elements from *Sodomei*, had joined together in a National Labor Union League (*Zenkoku Rodo Kumiai Domei*), or *Zenro*, with a total membership of 45,000, largely concentrated in the Osaka-Kobe area.)

In contrast to the strong stand taken by the communists, the central committee of the Social Democratic Party was quite guarded in its reaction to the hostilities in Manchuria. After sending a mission into the

* The policy statement of the new party began with a preamble that read in part: "The Communist Party opposes legal trade unions, disrupts farmers' national organizations, and demands sole leadership of the proletarian movement. In opposing all legal activities, the party is isolated from the masses. The social democracy of the Social Democratic Party (in practice, harmony between classes) is on the wane because it cannot even mobilize the petty bourgeoisie. The type of socialism that avoids a thoroughgoing struggle against the imperialistic bourgeoisie cannot help falling into social fascism (or national socialism). This prop of the bourgeoisie must be destroyed" (*Nihon Rodo Nenkan-1931*, p. 478; cited in Scalapino, manuscript on the Japanese labor movement).

fighting area, it adopted a "Resolution on the Manchurian and Mongolian Question" on November 22.⁶² The nature of that resolution was symptomatic of the dilemma faced by the proletarian parties. Should they oppose Japanese expansion in accordance with the anti-war provisions of their programs, or should they accept the *fait accompli* and justify it? The choice was not a simple one for individual members. Some were intimidated by the pressure tactics of the military and civilian rightists, who increasingly resorted to the use of violence. Others accepted the need to be cautious in the expression of attitudes toward the military, but were determined to advance the principles and program of democratic socialism and to maintain the independence of the proletarian parties. Still others, motivated by patriotism and sincerely convinced of the justice of Japan's cause, provided a basis for the development of national socialist factions, which were increasingly attracted to the idea of alliance with nationalist groups.

Akamatsu, by then secretary-general of the Social Democratic Party, and his followers became converts to national or state socialism and sought to lead the party in that direction. He made repeated statements in favor of Japan's expansion. However, there was strong opposition to this movement, particularly among Sodomei elements. Akamatsu and his group finally left the party in May 1932, and subsequently helped establish the Japanese State Socialist Party (Nihon Kokka Shakaito), which would "seek to construct a new Japan without exploitation on the basis of the national spirit of millions of people under one ruler."⁶³

The second of the two legal proletarian parties, the National Labor-Farmer Masses Party, unlike the Social Democrats, openly opposed Japanese policy in Manchuria and demanded the withdrawal of troops.⁶⁴ However, it, too, ultimately split when some of its members broke with the party leaders after presenting a resolution favoring "a practical strategy suitable to our state and society."⁶⁵

The secession of the nationalist factions from the two major proletarian parties had its bright side: it helped to stimulate the unification of the remaining majority factions in the parties, which merged in July 1932 to form the Social Masses Party (Shakai Taishuto). This merger constituted a unified resistance to the rightward swing of the pendulum in the socialist camp under the pressure of militarism and war.⁶⁶ (Earlier, in June 1931, Sodomei, Zenro, and other smaller labor federations had formed the Labor Club, which, after the establishment of the Social Masses Party, was transformed into the Congress of Japanese Labor Unions—Nihon Rodo Kumiai Kaigi—with a total mem-

bership of 280,000 workers.⁶⁷ Like the Social Masses Party, the congress took antifascist and anti-imperialist stances.) There was no sign, however, that the Japanese Communist Party was ready to cooperate with the legal left-wing movement. Quite the contrary, the communists continued to attack the socialists as tools of capitalism. When a shift in communist tactics finally came a few years later, it was much too late. However, it is hardly likely that the socialists would have welcomed communist cooperation, even in 1931.

INCREASED COMMUNIST ACTIVITY

The outbreak of hostilities in Manchuria placed Prime Minister Wakatsuki's cabinet in an impossible situation. It was compelled to assume responsibility for the actions of the military, whom it could not effectively control, earning only the animosity of the public. At the same time, it sought to reconcile the actions of the army with Japan's obligations under the Covenant of the League of Nations and other treaty provisions. Unable to cope with the situation, the cabinet fell in December, turning the government over to a veteran Seiyukai politician, Inukai Tsuyoshi, who also was unable to stem the military tide. The fighting in Manchuria spread to Shanghai in January 1932, continuing until a cease-fire in March. Meanwhile, the army set up the puppet state of Manchukuo in February 1932. On the economic front, the fighting started a boom in the munitions industry. Although this was helpful to the economy, urban unemployment was still very high, and conditions in the rural areas worsened. In these political and economic circumstances, the Japanese Communist Party made every effort to expand its operations.

One immediate focus of party activity was the general election scheduled for February 20, following Prime Minister Inukai's dissolution of the Diet. Communist policy was formulated at a January 22 meeting of the central committee:

The party will take part in the general election campaign in order to lead the masses . . . in the direction of revolutionary class struggle and to channel them into the party organization. The party's fundamental policy in the general election will be to follow class struggle principles to the fullest and to expose reactionary policies systematically by comparing them with the party's policies. The party will correctly adopt the tactics of the united front from below, select candidates from among party members, and support others . . . who accept party policies and fight to implement them. . . . The central slogan will be "Give us bread and jobs; land and freedom."⁶⁸

The central committee decided four days later to nominate five of the leaders who were standing trial to run as candidates for the Diet. Sano Manabu, Sugiura, and Karasawa were nominated as candidates for Tokyo districts; Nabeyama and Mitamura, for Osaka districts. The committee also persuaded Yoshida Yoshiichi, a worker at the Tokyo Electric Company, to run with communist support. Only Yoshida filed his candidacy; the others could do no more than secretly send announcements of intention from jail. The central committee ordered the organization of "election struggle committees" in industrial and transportation installations; taking advantage of the election campaign, it had rank and file members, as well as party sympathizers, distribute handbills and pamphlets calling for mass demonstrations and political strikes. Inevitably, all of this activity led to more arrests.

At the polls, the six communist candidates won a total of only 2,071 votes, over half of which were declared invalid. Yoshida, who was arrested on February 17, three days before the election, polled the largest number of votes—921. (The party claimed he won some 13,000.)⁶⁹ Sano received 637 votes; Karasawa, 229; Sugiura, 213; Mitamura, 42; and Nabeyama, 28. The legal proletarian parties did not make much of a showing either. They elected only five candidates and received only 275,502 votes, about half of the total proletarian vote in the 1930 election. This disappointing result helped to stimulate the merger of the two proletarian parties into the Social Masses Party. The election victor was the Seiyukai, which won a large majority in the lower house of the Diet. Seiyukai factions had already sought informal alliances with the military. Inukai made some efforts to hold the army in check, but he could not muster sufficient support among the politicians and bureaucrats. Right-wing pressure, including the use of terror and assassination, was greater than ever before. Within three months, on May 15, Inukai fell victim to a military assassin's bullet. Ten days later the Seiyukai cabinet resigned, bringing the era of party government to an end. Militarism was on the ascendant.

In the view of the Communist Party, the establishment of the Seiyukai cabinet, which was expected to support a strong foreign policy, was a big step in the direction of fascist dictatorship. In fact, a sense of crisis was growing in the central committee. Early in March 1932, *Red Flag* warned:

It is surely without regard for the complicated nature of practical politics to think that fascist dictatorship can be established only when a fascist party achieves power. Inukai's Seiyukai cabinet is obviously embarking on

the implementation of fascist policies. Moreover, it is absolutely wrong to regard planned coups by the military as something totally unrelated to politics, or as something directly controlled by the emperor and separate and distinct from economic life. Behind the military stands the finance bourgeoisie. The armed forces represent one of the most important instruments for oppression in the bourgeois state. In Japan, they appear to be under the direct control of the emperor and to constitute an independent force. This is superficial, however; they are an organ of the financial oligarchy.⁷⁰

The party felt that it had failed to respond adequately to the demands of the masses. In *Red Flag*, the central committee declared:

The rapid increase in the number of strikes and their mounting intensity, the increase in the number of mass demonstrations on the streets by unemployed workers, the mass uprising in the form of riots by the poor peasants, and the overt, if partial, revolt against the machinery of state power dramatically illustrate the mounting revolutionary trend in Japan. Despite the cooperation of the authorities, the fascists, and the social fascists in the attempt at suppression, the revolutionary trend is growing steadily and provides us with advantageous conditions. Indeed, the influence of the party is increasing day after day. . . . However, we cannot claim that we are leading all mass struggles. Our major weakness lies in the fact that we have fallen behind the times.⁷¹

Kazama and his associates were determined to popularize the party by expanding the circulation of *Red Flag*. They felt that *The Second Proletarian News* had outlived its usefulness. It had been operated as a front organ and thus was not directly linked to the party. Moreover, its circulation of some 50,000 had tended to prevent expansion of *Red Flag*, which had remained a mimeographed paper with a very limited circulation, usually between 800 and 1,000. The party leaders felt that, with the change of strategy directed by the 1931 thesis, there was a need to publish a single popular organ—one whose relationship to the party was absolutely clear.⁷² They decided to discontinue support of *The Second Proletarian News*, which ultimately ceased publication in November 1932, and to turn *Red Flag* into a printed daily. This objective was not achieved, however; *Red Flag* was generally published only six times a month beginning with the April 8, 1932, issue. Circulation quickly jumped to 7,000. The party's central committee also tried to establish an organ for internal organizational purposes—*Party Builder* (*Tokensetsusha*)—modeled on German and Chinese publications, but only two issues were published, one dated June 15

and the other, August 29, 1932.⁷³ The central committee also planned to publish a theoretical journal—*Bolsheviks*—but this did not materialize. However, the remnants of the Communist Youth League managed to put out a few issues of *Lenin Youth*.⁷⁴

As in 1931, the new burst of party activity was to culminate in a great May Day demonstration of proletarian revolutionary strength against “the fascist dictatorship of bourgeoisie and landlords” that “is literally slaughtering workers in a war of robbery.”⁷⁵ This was asking a good deal of a party and fractions with little numerical and organizational strength. Furthermore, the police had successfully planted spies in a number of key party positions. Such agents not only supplied information, but actively thwarted the plans of the communists. One such figure, Miyagami Noritake, was a permanent member of Zenkyo’s central committee and chief of its organizational department under the assumed name of Matsubara. He not only was responsible for the arrest of two key fraction members on Zenkyo’s central committee, but also was influential in developing in Zenkyo an attitude of organizational independence from the Communist Party.⁷⁶ In June 1932, the party central committee expelled him from the party, calling him an “ultra spy-provocateur.” It held him responsible for alienating Zenkyo from the party through his management of personnel matters and for sabotaging the May Day struggle.⁷⁷

May Day, 1932, proved to be an even greater disaster for the communists than that of the previous year. There were numerous arrests even before May 1, and on that day, in Tokyo alone, 765 persons were rounded up by the authorities, who put some 6,500 policemen on the streets to maintain order. Nevertheless, although the communists admitted the failure of specific plans, they doggedly maintained that “May Day proved a great advance in every sense.”* In fact, it proved that the party and Zenkyo could not effectively mount mass demonstrations in the face of the power of the police.

A SECOND SHIFT IN STRATEGY

The May Day fiasco coincided with another shift in strategy for the Japanese Communist Party, again according to instructions from

* An article by Hashizume Torao in the May 16, 1932, issue of *Red Flag* stated: “Everywhere rose cries of ‘Long Live the Japanese Communist Party,’ ‘Long Live Zenkyo,’ ‘Down with the Emperor-System Government of Capitalists and Landlords,’ ‘Long Live Labor-Peasant Soviet Japan.’ The songs ‘Red Flag’ and ‘Internationale’ overwhelmed the May Day song. . . . There was a feeling of solidarity among the masses of workers of the revolutionary and reformist unions” (*Sekki*, II, 177-78).

Moscow. Kazama and his central committee colleagues got their first warning of the Comintern's dissatisfaction with the 1931 theses and reendorsement of the 1927 theses when Iijima Kimi, one of the women delegates to the Fifth Profintern Congress, returned home late in 1931 and reported to Matsumura. There is no evidence that the Communist Party began to alter its strategy at that time, but within a few months, it received specific Comintern criticism of its strategy. Kazama had sent Gengoromaru Yoshiharu of the Communist Youth League to Moscow in February 1931; he returned to Tokyo in early April 1932, reporting that the Comintern had declared the 1931 theses to be in error. Among the criticisms made by the Comintern was the charge that not enough emphasis had been placed upon the need to destroy the imperial system. Other criticisms concerned the continuing factionalism in the left-wing movement, the adherence to formulas, the tendency to ignore the use of legal mass organizations, the isolation from the workers, and the weakness of the youth, peasant, and anti-imperialist movements.⁷⁸ The party could hardly ignore the criticism contained in Gengoromaru's report, but, in all probability, it wanted to wait for more detailed instructions from Moscow.

There were other indications of a change in Comintern thinking in the writings of the Japanese in Moscow. Nosaka found upon his arrival there late in the spring of 1931 that the 1931 theses were no longer in favor. He seems to have changed his own views in order to conform to the new Comintern outlook; in fact, he published an article—"The General Election and the Tasks of the Communists in Japan" (which appeared in the February 11, 1932, issue of *International Press Correspondence*, too late to have much influence on party election policy)—that contained the first public criticism of the 1931 theses. In it, he wrote:

The overthrow of the monarchy and the confiscation of land for the peasants are the decisive tasks in the immediate stage of the Japanese revolution; therefore they determine the character of the revolution at this stage as the bourgeois-democratic revolution that quickly develops into the proletarian revolution. We must fight any tendencies to leap over this inevitable stage of the Japanese revolution. At the same time, through the election campaign, we must actively and relentlessly expose the real character of the Japanese monarchy—the chief instrument of war, starvation, and repression in the interests of the bourgeoisie and landlords. We must also energetically and widely convey to the masses that the proletariat's central task is the forcible overthrow of the monarchy, and that all bourgeois and "proletarian" parties are the active supporters of bloodthirsty Tenno [the emperor].⁷⁹

Nosaka's article was followed by an article prepared for *Communist International*, the organ of the Comintern's executive committee, by Yamamoto Masami, a postgraduate student at Kutobe who had been in Moscow since 1926. In this article—"The War of Robbery of Japanese Imperialism in China and the Antiwar Struggle of the Japanese Proletariat"—Yamamoto, like Nosaka, emphasized the strategy of the struggle against "the rule of the military-bureaucratic, police state-emperor system."

The Comintern made its own position clear in a lead article—"On the Situation in Japan and the Tasks of the Japanese Communist Party"—that appeared in the Russian edition of *Communist International* on March 20 and in the English edition on April 15. The Japanese Communist Party devoted a special issue of *Red Flag*, dated July 2, 1932, to a translation of the Russian version.⁸⁰ The Comintern branded "erroneous" the definition of the coming Japanese revolution as "a proletarian revolution that would include a broad scope of bourgeois-democratic tasks." This mistake, the Comintern declared, "can be attributed to underestimating the tasks of agrarian revolution and lack of understanding of the acute agrarian problems and the need to destroy landlordism completely." Adopting the same line that Stalin had used against the "Trotskyists" in the Soviet Union (he took the opposite position when attacking the so-called right elements), the Comintern declared:

The struggle of the peasants, under the leadership of the proletariat, for land and against landlordism is a central feature of the coming revolution in Japan. Underestimation of the importance of this struggle is the greatest error committed by the Japanese comrades. They have disregarded the revolutionary role of the middle peasants. They are completely wrong in their contention that Japanese middle peasants cannot stage a revolutionary struggle against landlords and the existing regime.

The Comintern also argued that the Japanese communists had misinterpreted the nature of Japanese government, minimizing the power of the imperial throne. Its own view was that "The Japanese monarchy, an historical product of feudalism, which once depended on the landlord class, has developed into a bourgeois-landlord type of monarchy as a result of the unique development of capitalism—the fusion of finance capital and the vast remnants of feudalism—and is dependent on both exploiting classes—the bourgeoisie and the landlords—whose interests it represents in carrying out its policies."⁸¹ Because of the

importance of the agrarian revolution and the role of the monarchy, the Comintern claimed that it was “proper” to define the nature of the coming revolution in Japan “as a bourgeois-democratic revolution with a tendency toward a forced transformation into a socialist revolution.”

In the same issue of *Red Flag*, the party’s central committee made clear its willingness to accept the Comintern line:

This article . . . presents serious criticism of the draft political theses that we published last year. This is not the first instance of such criticism. It has already appeared in articles by comrades [in *Communist International* and in *International Press Correspondence*] and in special pamphlets. The fact that it was published as the lead article in the Comintern’s organ means that it is the opinion of the executive committee. Therefore, we cannot dispute it. We loyally accept the decision of the top leadership and plan to put into practice its specific instructions.

The central committee also disclosed that new theses on the problem of Japan—the so-called 1932 theses—had been prepared and published by the Comintern, and promised to translate and publish them quickly.

THE 1932 THESES

As early as the spring of 1931, Comintern officials had expressed doubts about the wisdom of the strategy of proletarian revolution in Japan. According to Kazama, these doubts can be linked directly to Safarov’s fall from power in the Comintern because he had “underestimated the role of peasants in another country.” As a consequence, says Kazama, Safarov’s Japanese policy was reexamined and criticized for having a “semi-Trotskyist tendency.”⁸² Kazama’s interpretation is supported in general terms by Nosaka, who blamed the “Trotskyists in Moscow” for the confusion created by the 1931 theses. Nosaka charged that the Trotskyists were ignorant of the Japanese imperial system.⁸³ A more important reason for the reexamination of Japanese strategy, however, was the outbreak of war in Manchuria.

The Comintern was clearly alarmed by the events in Manchuria.⁸⁴ Not only did the Japanese military pose a serious threat to the “fatherland of socialism,” but its vitality and unbridled power challenged the validity of communist revolutionary strategy in Japan. It was difficult, if not impossible, to continue to describe the Japanese military as the instrument of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The analysis provided in

the 1931 theses was too simple. It underestimated the role of the feudal elements, especially the monarchy and the military under its control, and the economic strength of those elements in agriculture.

The necessary evidence is lacking to describe in detail the process by which the new theses were drafted. Evidently Kuusinen played the leading role among the Comintern officials. The final draft was based upon a report on "Japanese Imperialism and the Nature of the Japanese Revolution" that he submitted to the Comintern presidium on March 7, 1932.⁸⁵ Kuusinen consulted various Japanese in Moscow, including Katayama, Yamamoto Kenzo, Nosaka, and Yamamoto Masami.⁸⁶ However, it is not clear whether Japanese participation in the drafting was at all substantial.*

In his report Kuusinen maintained that the Japanese Communist Party had erred in formulating strategy because it had emphasized only one aspect of the economy of Japan—finance capital. This incomplete view of the Japanese economy had led to underestimation of the Japanese monarchy and of the survivals of feudalism in Japan, and to an erroneous conclusion about the suitability of a proletarian revolution for Japan. Kuusinen endorsed the view expressed in the Comintern's "On the Situation in Japan and the Tasks of the Japanese Communist Party" that the Japanese imperial system, with its civil and military apparatus, should have a partly independent role. He described the relationship of the imperial system to the classes supporting it: "The monarchical state apparatus represents the basic framework for the existing dictatorship of the class of exploiters; it rests upon those classes; it represents their interests; it is closely linked with the upper groups of the bourgeoisie and landlords." But was the monarch merely a figurehead whose actions were determined by the bourgeois and landed groups? Kuusinen answered in the negative, declaring that the monarchy "develops its own independent and relatively major role as well as its own absolute character, hidden by external

* Nosaka claims that when he arrived in Moscow, the Comintern had only begun to review Japanese strategy and that "with the participation of Katayama Sen, Yamamoto Kenzo, myself, and Japanese students, we began to work out the 1932 theses" ("Fusetsu Gojunen," p. 119). Yamamoto Masami gives a different account: "Though I lacked any official capacity, I was the only Japanese who was directly involved from the beginning in working out the theses. Yamamoto Kenzo was not involved to any great extent, and Nosaka arrived after the basic orientation of the theses had been determined." He goes on to comment: "This was not an appropriate way to formulate the basic policies of a native communist party, but in those years Comintern instructions prevailed over everything else" (Yamamoto Masami, "Sanjuninen Teze").

pseudo-constitutional forms.” In brief, the Japanese monarchy represented two sets of interests—its own interests and those of the bourgeoisie and landlords. In Kuusinen’s opinion, the “relative independence” of the Japanese monarchy was at least as great as that of the Russian monarchy. He asserted that Lenin himself had deemed it a serious mistake to equate the Russian monarchy with the dominant classes.

The 1932 theses appeared in the various foreign-language editions of *International Press Correspondence* dated May 26, 1932. A Japanese friend sent the German version to Kawakami, who had joined the Communist Party early in 1932.⁸⁷ At the request of the party’s central committee, Kawakami translated the first two sections of the theses into Japanese, and Kobayashi Yasuhiko (alias Murata Yoichi), a member of the editorial staff of *International*, the organ of the Industrial Labor Research Institute, translated the third section. The translations were mimeographed and given limited distribution in pamphlet form in late June; several weeks later, they were more widely distributed as a special *Red Flag* pamphlet dated July 10. Kobayashi also translated the English version of the theses into Japanese; this translation was published in the September 1 issue of *International*.⁸⁸

Like prior statements of strategy, the 1932 theses began with an analysis of Japanese imperialism.* In this case, the focus was the recent aggression in Manchuria, but the words were old and familiar. According to the theses, the military adventure of Japanese imperialism was directly connected with a sharp aggravation of internal contradictions, all of which had grown more intense as a result of the severe economic crisis. The Japanese proletariat and the Communist Party were called upon to combine the struggle against imperialist aggression with the struggle to emancipate the workers and peasants. Their task was to convert the imperialist war into a civil war to overthrow the bourgeois-landlord monarchy. However, the communists were cautioned that the character and the tasks of the coming revolution in Japan could not be properly judged “without analysis and without taking into consideration the peculiarities of the ruling system in Japan, which combines strong elements of feudalism with highly developed monopolistic capitalism.”

The theses described the character and role of the monarchy:

* The text of the theses appears as Appendix F, pp. 332-51.

The absolute monarchy that was formed in Japan after 1868 has maintained its full power in spite of all changes of policy, and has constantly increased its bureaucratic apparatus for oppression of the working masses. It was based chiefly on the feudal parasitic class of landlords and on the rapacious bourgeoisie, . . . and generally represented their interests. At the same time, it maintained its independence, its relatively significant role, and its absolute character. . . . The monarchy remains the main pillar of political reaction and of all the relics of feudalism in the country. . . . Its destruction must be considered the first of the fundamental tasks of the revolution in Japan.

According to the theses, the Japanese Communist Party had underestimated the role of the monarchy and had not understood its relationship to "bourgeois state forms" like parliament and the party cabinet. They maintained that the extension of election rights for the male population in 1925 was "a political bargain" between the monarchy on the one hand and the landlords and the imperialist bourgeoisie on the other—a bargain that was calculated "to trick the people by increasing their parliamentary illusions and to bring about a closer unity between the monarchist bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie." Thus, although there had been an increase in the number of voters, the institution of a party cabinet of ministers, and an increase in the role of the financial oligarchy in the government, there had not been any restriction of the rights and powers of the monarch and the monarchist bureaucracy.

The theses then analyzed Japanese agriculture—"the second of the main component parts of the ruling system"—describing it as "this backward, Asiatic, semifeudal system in the Japanese villages that hinders the development of productive forces, increases the degradation of agriculture, and pauperizes the peasant masses." It was pointed out that there was no possibility that the ruling classes would alter the feudal basis of Japanese agriculture. Therefore, an agrarian revolution should be regarded as one of the fundamental tasks of the Japanese revolution. The third and last basic element of the Japanese power structure, according to the theses, was "predatory monopolist capitalism." The analysis of Japanese capitalism focused on the financial oligarchy and emphasized the close relationship between big capital and the "whole system of bureaucratic monarchy that is carrying out its policy."

Proceeding from this analysis of the conditions in Japan, the theses proposed the strategy of "a bourgeois-democratic revolution with a tendency to grow rapidly into a socialist revolution": "The Commu-

nist Party . . . must clearly understand that the path to the dictatorship of the proletariat in present Japanese conditions can only be through the bourgeois-democratic revolution, i.e., through the overthrow of the monarchy, the expropriation of the landlords, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants.”

A discussion of revolutionary tactics followed. Emphasizing the need for a close alliance of workers and peasants under the hegemony of the proletariat, the theses outlined the decisive role to be played by soviets of workers’, peasants’, and soldiers’ deputies:

The imperative task of the communists during a revolutionary revolt is to form soviets of workers’, peasants’, and soldiers’ deputies everywhere, especially at the moment of the overthrow of the monarchy. The task of the soviets is to fight for the complete destruction of the government apparatus of the bourgeois-landlord dictatorship (the disarming of the police, the military police, and the officers of the army and the navy, the arming of the workers and peasants, the formation of a proletarian red guard, the dispersal of parliament, and the formation of central and local organs of government officials elected by the workers and peasants, etc.).

According to the theses, only the replacement of the whole state apparatus by soviets led by the Communist Party would prevent the Japanese bourgeoisie, especially its social-democratic wing, from limiting the “revolutionary revolt” by making political concessions—“declaring a bourgeois republic”—while preserving the basis of the bourgeois-landlord dictatorship. The soviets would provide the means for establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat and quickly transforming the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one—the main task of the Communist Party after “the overthrow of the monarchy by the victorious peoples’ revolution.” In Japan, “where the material prerequisites for socialism exist and the destruction of the capitalist system of exploitation has become necessary,” the formation and strengthening of the soviets and the achievement of the leading role of the communists in them would be sufficient in themselves to permit the revolution to pass on to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the construction of socialism.

The strategy and tactics were clear, but what were the prospects? According to the theses, circumstances were such that the communists could draw vast masses of workers and peasants into the revolutionary movement; the situation was ripe for success. As it was put in the theses: “Big revolutionary events may take place in the future. Many facts already point to the possibility of spontaneous outbursts of mass

protest and struggle in the near future." However, the theses warned that these spontaneous actions might easily be diverted from the revolutionary movement if the Communist Party did not explain to the masses the causes of their misery and who was responsible, if it did not expose the true character and aims of the aggression against China, if it did not carry out a systematic exposure of the policies of the government and the ruling classes, if it did not undermine the influence of the social fascists and become the leader of the everyday struggles of the masses, and, most important, if it did not show the masses that revolution was the answer to the crisis. Again, "To the Masses!" In the words of the theses: "All communists must learn to win over the masses and organize them, to extend and deepen conflicts, to lead struggles, guided by the experience of the mass movement. . . . If they do not learn these lessons, there will be a continuation of the present condition, in which everyone knows the correct tasks—for instance, 'To the Masses in the Factories'—but does not fully carry them out."

In publishing the Japanese translation of the new theses, Kazama and his comrades on the central committee announced their unconditional acceptance of the decisions of the Comintern.⁸⁹ They grudgingly admitted that they had underestimated the importance of the monarchy and of the agrarian revolution, and therefore had erred in defining the nature of the coming revolution. However, they pointed out that the 1931 draft was the responsibility of the Comintern, as well as of the Japanese comrades. Kazama claimed later that the Japanese Communist Party suffered great embarrassment as a result of the criticism of the 1931 draft and the publication of the 1932 theses.⁹⁰

Perhaps it was the displeasure of the Japanese party that prompted the Comintern to modify its criticism on the occasion of the party's tenth anniversary. A statement of congratulations signed by Ernst Thaelman, head of the German Communist Party, and L. André Marty, head of the French Communist Party, read:

The central committee of the Communist Party of Japan is carrying out the theses . . . of the Communist International not only in words, but in deeds; it is criticizing in a bolshevist manner and correcting certain formulations about the character of the coming revolution and the tasks of the party that were contained in the draft of the political theses of April 1931. These errors, which have now been overcome by the party, . . . were only episodes and were not characteristic of the political activity of the Communist Party of Japan.

These formulations were largely due to incorrect theories with regard to the character of the Japanese revolution developed by individuals in

the executive committee of the Communist International and the Red International Labor Union prior to discussion of this question by the leading organs of the executive committee of the Communist International. Neither the central committee of the Communist Party of Japan nor the party as a whole bears any responsibility for these erroneous theories.⁹¹

THE PARTY DISINTEGRATES

The party continued to grow under the leadership of Kazama and Iwata. By the end of the summer of 1932, it had over 400 members and an elaborate central organization. The central committee consisted of Kazama (chairman), Iwata, Konno, Tai Tameshichi, Miyagawa Torao, Matsumura, Kodama Shizuko, Hasegawa Shigeru, Shimizu Kiyozo, Gengoromaru, Hirasawa Eiichi, and five candidate members: Ishida Kyoze, Mimura Ryoichi, Kishi Masaru, Oizumi Kenzo, and Yamashita Tokuji. The departments and their members were: organization—Kazama, Konno; local organizations—Konno, Ishida, Tango Kichirobei; mass organizations—Tai, Miyagawa, Matsuo Shigeki, Kobayashi Takiji; labor union liaison—Tai, Shimizu; peasants—Miyagawa, Oizumi; youth—Konno; women—Miyagawa, Iijima Kimi; agitation-propaganda—Iwata, Yamashita; and publications—Iwata, Kazama, Konno, Mimura. A military affairs department, headed by Hasegawa, had its own organization, agitation-propaganda, and techniques bureaus, under Hasegawa, Motani Koichiro, and Umeda Yuzura, respectively. A housing and funds department, headed by Matsumura, was also divided, with housing under Hojo Yotsuo, funds under Imaizumi Zenichi, and local affairs under Kuki Katsuichi.⁹² The party also established a special committee for intelligence purposes. Its members—Kuki, Imaizumi, Takaya Kenkichi, Negishi Chozo, and Otsuka Yusho—formed two-man teams to collect information on right- and left-wing organizations, the army, and the police.

The party focused its activities on antiwar propaganda and the development of cells among the military in this period. It did not oppose mobilization, seeing in it an opportunity to extend its base to the army and navy as peasants and workers were drafted. What better way to arm potential revolutionaries? In September the party launched a new organ—*Friend of the Soldiers* (*Heishi no Tomo*)—to be distributed among army personnel; another—*High Mast* (*Takai Masto*)—was planned for sailors. These bold projects met with little success, however. *Friend of the Soldiers* was printed only twice before the police crushed the party in a new series of arrests. On the organizational side,

the establishment of a sailors' committee at Kure Naval Base was the only noteworthy achievement.⁹³

The central committee was determined to expand party operations along the lines dictated by the 1932 theses, but financing, always difficult, had become a greater problem than ever before. Financial support from the Far Eastern Bureau at Shanghai had been suspended since June 1931, when the police arrested the bureau's local agents.⁹⁴ For the most part, the party had to live off the contributions of sympathizers; the total rarely exceeded 5,000 yen a month.⁹⁵ To supplement these meager resources, the party operated a dance hall in Tokyo for a while.

Pressed for funds to expand operations, as well as to hold a national convention, the party's housing and funds department resorted to desperate measures. On October 6, 1932, three men armed with revolvers robbed a branch office of the Kawasaki Daiichi Bank in Omori, on the southern edge of Tokyo, and escaped with some 32,000 yen. Since the robbery was well planned and since the men wore khaki coats, it was rumored that the robbery had been committed by army officers in preparation for a coup. The case was broken within three days, however, when the police arrested a young man in the act of buying guns from a construction contractor who engaged in the illicit sale of weapons. The young man was Imaizumi, of the housing and funds department of the Japanese Communist Party. Under severe cross-examination, he not only described his role in the Omori bank robbery, but also disclosed his relationship to the party. He informed the police that the robbery, planned by Kuki Katsuichi, Momose Yukio, Otsuka Yusho, Ishii Masayoshi, Nishishiro Yoshiji, Nakamura Tsuneichi, and Imaizumi, and executed by Nakamura, Nishishiro, and Tateoka Masaaki, was to be the first of a series of robberies of Tokyo banks. (With the exception of Matsumura, who encouraged his subordinates to take such rash action, the party's central committee was not informed of these plans.) By the end of October, the police had arrested most of those involved; they arrested Otsuka on January 3, 1933. Only Momose escaped arrest.⁹⁶

The Omori bank robbery badly discredited the Communist Party in the eyes of the public and seriously damaged its prestige among its own members. The authorities did their utmost to create the impression that the communists were no better than gangsters. The party's central committee sought to counter the adverse publicity by

appealing for party unity against bourgeois propaganda in an extra issue of *Red Flag* dated October 11, 1932. The appeal read in part:

The “Bank Gang Incident,” which occurred at Omori on the 6th, has been used by the ruling classes as an excuse for deliberate and systematic adverse propaganda against the central committee of the Japanese Communist Party. . . . Through every medium, the ruling classes are trying to convince the masses that this incident has some relationship to the political and organizational principles of the Japanese Communist Party. . . . We have no need to rob a bank to get money. Such an action has nothing to do with the political life of the party nor with the tasks of the immediate struggles. Instead of worrying about such plans, we have devoted ourselves to developing the class struggle further by transforming sporadic and defensive struggles into revolutionary, united mass action, thereby revolutionizing all working elements.⁹⁷

Mass arrests by the police once again gave the Communist Party no chance to back up its bold words with concrete actions. On October 30, the day following the court judgment in the year-and-a-half-long trial of the former party leaders, the police arrested 11 party members, who were at an Atami spa to serve as delegates from various regions to a national meeting to discuss the new theses. On the same day, the police also arrested Kazama, Iwata, and Konno—all of the central committee; within the next two months, they rounded up almost all of the communist leaders.⁹⁸ This time the police were especially brutal in their handling of prisoners. Iwata, for example, was tortured to death in November;⁹⁹ in February 1933, Kobayashi, who in addition to being a member of the mass organizations department of the party was a novelist and a KOPF activist, was arrested and murdered by the police.¹⁰⁰ Another central committee member, Ueda, was arrested in April; his fate has never been revealed. Some 654 persons were indicted out of a total of 12,622 arrested. Of those indicted, 499 were either Communist Party members (373) or Communist Youth League members (126): 282 were from Zenkyo, 65 from the Zenno National Congress, 51 from KOPF, and 101 from various student groups or unaffiliated.¹⁰¹

Later, in court, the communists blamed many of their difficulties on the infiltration of the party organization by groups of police spies. In their judgment, which is no doubt correct, Matsumura was the ringleader of one such group.¹⁰² The only question about his activities seems to be when he became an agent of the police. The communists

had different opinions. Some said he was a spy from the time he went to Moscow in 1926; others claimed that he entered the employ of the police after his arrest and brief detention in July 1930.¹⁰³ Otsuka, one of the members of the party's two-man intelligence teams, provided a somewhat different explanation. He wrote that Matsumura turned informer after his arrest in October 1932.¹⁰⁴

The history of the Japanese Communist Party as a political organization terminates with the 1932 arrests. The period from 1930 to 1932 constitutes the last of three cycles in the life of the party. As in 1923-24 and 1928-29, the party and its front organizations were destroyed. This time, however, the party was not able to reorganize as it had in the past. From 1933 on, the history of the Japanese communist movement centers around small groups. Not only were these groups rarely united, they were more often than not in conflict with each other. All were ultimately routed by the police.

Chapter 9

Years of Retreat, 1932-1945

It was under conditions of continuing police suppression that a small group of Japanese communists sought to reestablish and revitalize the central organization of the Communist Party in the winter of 1932–33. The police extended their dragnet in late January and early February to Aichi, Mie, and Nagano prefectures. In Nagano Prefecture, where the communists were particularly active, the police arrested 138 primary school teachers and 153 Zenkyo, Communist Youth League, and Zenno National Congress members. Seventy-seven of the teachers were indicted; 27 were subsequently sentenced to jail.¹ In Osaka the police jailed 1,500 persons. The final blow came on February 27, when the police caught five of Zenkyo's top leaders just prior to a meeting of its central committee.

This was the difficult situation that Yamamoto Masami faced when he returned from Moscow to Japan in December 1932 with orders to rebuild the party structure and implement the strategy of the 1932 theses. Working with Noro and Oizumi, the only central committee leaders who had managed to avoid arrest, he reestablished a party organization, which included a central committee whose members were Yamamoto (chairman), Noro, Taniguchi Naohei, Oizumi, and Sahara Yasuji, three bureaus, including a secretariat, and 11 departments under the secretariat. Yamamoto served on each of the three bureaus, whose other members were Taniguchi (secretariat), Noro and Taniguchi (political bureau), and Sahara and Oizumi (organizational bureau). The departments and their members were: organization—Oizumi; agitation-propaganda—Miyamoto and Akizasa Masanosuke; Zenkyo—Yamamoto; youth—Taniguchi; peasants—Yamamoto and Oizumi; finance—Yamamoto; military affairs—Yamamoto; antiwar committee—Yamamoto and Matsuo Shigeki; *Red Flag* editorial board—Taniguchi and Akizasa; information—Yamamoto; and Red Relief Association (an affiliate of the party that assisted the families of communists in jail)—Yamamoto. (Later, two candidate members were added to the central organization: Yamashita Heiji—after March—and Miyamoto Kenji—after April.)²

The party was obviously little more than Yamamoto's instrument. He did not have much confidence in his comrades; consequently, he exerted as much direct control as possible. The political and organizational bureaus were supposed to recommend policy, and he had his hand in both; the secretariat was to supervise day-to-day operations of the departments, and it was under his immediate control, with several specific functions designated as his personal responsibility.

In the face of continuing suppression, Yamamoto and his comrades endeavored to maintain as bold a front as possible. They were determined to create the impression that the authorities could not cut the party off from the Japanese masses. *Red Flag* boasted in January that the party's supporting force included 15,000 Zenkyo members, fractions representing 50,000 peasants, the large membership of the Communist Youth League, 10,000 constituents of KOPF, and 15,000 contributors to the relief of the families of jailed communists.³ Despite this boast, the party had little effective cell or fractional organization below the level of the central committee.* The small groups that managed to avoid police detection found it difficult, if not impossible, to maintain lines of communication. Hakamada Satomi, then one of the party's candidate members, later described the situation:

At that time, especially after the large-scale round-up, there was virtually no cell worth mentioning. The number of active party members in factories was very small. . . . These members were forced to make contact on the streets ten or more times each day. Take the example of a district committee member: he had to maintain communication with his fellow district committee members as well as with members on higher and lower levels; he also had to assist in distributing *Red Flag* and to contact groups in mass organizations. In this way, the members spent all their time simply maintaining communication through street contacts. Party members knew nothing of the organizational principles of the Communist Party.⁴

Red Flag was regarded by the central committee as its most important weapon in the struggle to increase party activity and influence. However, it was no easy task to print and distribute the publication on a regular basis. Money was one problem; only with great difficulty

* The central committee sought to strengthen party organization by adopting a new party constitution. An incomplete provisional constitution was published in the first issue of a new *Central Committee Bulletin*, dated April 5, 1933, and was to be approved at the next party convention. For the text, see Home Ministry, *Showa 1933*, pp. 14-18. A year earlier, the former central committee had prepared a draft constitution based on the standard constitution of the Comintern. The text is included in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 642-47.

was the central committee able to secure sufficient contributions to pay the printing charges, which were exorbitant because of the danger involved. Distribution was another problem; regional and district networks were developed, but links in them were often broken by arrests of key members.⁵ Despite these difficulties, the party circulated a professionally printed edition until December 1933, usually at five-day intervals. After that, *Red Flag* had to be mimeographed, and its circulation schedule was not as regular.

Using *Red Flag* to appeal for popular support, the central committee sought to mount a campaign from January 15 to January 21, 1933, against the Diet and the “budget of starvation and war.” The removal of a press ban on the October arrests prompted the party to agitate for a counteroffensive against the “imperial system’s wartime counter-revolutionary terror” and issue appeals for a “people’s revolution for rice, land, and freedom.” In the period before National Foundation Day—February 11—the party called for a mass struggle to overthrow the “emperor-type of fascist nationalist movement” through the formation of “self-defense guards to counter the fascist violence of the police and landlords in the villages.” The central committee analyzed the situation in *Red Flag*:

The revolutionary awakening of the masses, the resentment of workers, peasants, and soldiers toward the military-police rule of the capitalist-landlord emperor system, is most clearly seen in the rapid increase in the support and trust of our party by workers, peasants, soldiers, students, and the urban poor. In order to indict some 100 revolutionary workers and peasants as Communist Party members, the imperial system has had to round up several thousand people from among the working masses. Yet in so doing, the authorities not only were unable to crush our party as they had expected, but failed to deliver any decisive blow to our basic cells in factories or in other important places. The secret police of the imperial system planned and provoked the Bank Gang case as well as all other antisocial evil deeds through its network of spies and agents provocateurs, and in highly colored, fictitious propaganda attributed them to the communists. But the police could not destroy the trust in and support of our party by the masses. With even greater enthusiasm than before, the working masses are ready to display their strength by fighting the military-police violence of the capitalist-landlord government of the imperial system and destroying the treacherous and base secret police system.⁶

Red Flag hammered away at the same basic theme over the next few months, calling for demonstrations on a number of days: March 15, the anniversary of the 1928 arrests, which was selected as the date for a

“labor-farmer funeral” for Kobayashi; April 16, the anniversary of the arrests in 1929; and of course May Day. All of this agitation was expected to reach a climax on August 1, designated as “Antiwar Day.”

The central committee made a special effort to increase communist influence in the army and navy by reviving *Friend of the Soldiers* in March 1933; publication continued intermittently until October. The magazine was aimed at inductees in both services. It concentrated on publishing letters from soldiers and sailors that described their hard life at the hands of their officers, and emphasized “the suffering and starvation of the soldiers’ families, who are without their bread-winners.”⁷

Party activity was limited, however, by financial difficulties. Yamamoto, upon his return to Japan, had brought 10,000 yen provided by the Comintern, but the party did not get any additional support from that quarter. It became harder to collect funds from sympathizers,⁸ though the party was able to raise 10,000 yen for *Red Flag* by organizing the Red Flag Friends Association (Sekki Tomo no Kai) around party cells. In the May 15 issue of *Red Flag*, the party announced a campaign to raise 70,000 yen and encouraged a “socialist competition” among donors for this purpose. The campaign proved to be a miserable failure; by October the party had collected only 3,700 yen.* Party activity was also limited by the ever-present Japanese police. They were ready to combat every party move, and continued to make arrests. Taniguchi and Yamashita, of the party’s central committee, were arrested May 2, 1933, and Yamamoto, the following day. Sahara was probably also arrested at this time, although there is no record of the fact; at any rate, he disappeared.

Although these arrests did not completely destroy the central committee, they caused much confusion and precipitated a split among the remaining members. Party leadership became divided on the basis of two factions—an intellectual group and a worker group. After the arrests, Noro emerged as leader of the party, with the support of Miyamoto, a fellow intellectual on the central committee. Oizumi, the only other member of the committee to escape arrest, was of peasant origin and had been active in the peasant movement in Niigata Prefecture. When Noro sought to create a new secretariat composed of himself,

* The 3,700 yen total is the police estimate (see Home Ministry, *Showa 1933*, p. 41). The party’s income, according to information given the police by a central committee member, Henmi Shigeo, was 2,100 yen in June, 1,800 yen in July, and 1,700 yen in August. Monthly expenditures averaged 4,000 to 5,000 yen (Home Ministry, *Showa 1934*, pp. 29-30).

Miyamoto, and another intellectual, Henmi Shigeo, who had been associated with Noro at the Industrial Labor Research Institute, Oizumi and Matsuo, a former Zenkyo activist, opposed the move. Noro gave in and agreed to form a secretariat that included Oizumi and Obata Tatsuo, of Zenkyo, instead of Miyamoto and Henmi. As finally determined, the members of the party's central committee were Noro (chairman), Oizumi, Miyamoto, Henmi, and Obata. No one was designated as a candidate member. The secretariat included Noro, Oizumi, and Obata, the political bureau, Noro, Obata, and Henmi, and the organizational bureau, Obata, Oizumi, Miyamoto, and one Yasui.⁹

Noro held the key position in the central committee because of the intellectual leadership he gave to it. A sociologically oriented historian, he was the first party theoretician to be regarded as a scholar. After graduation from Keio University in 1926, and after serving a short term in jail, he emerged as a young intellectual whose view of history coincided with the analysis of modern Japan provided in the 1927 theses. Noro's first important scholarly work—*History of the Development of Japanese Capitalism (Nihon Shihonshugi Hattatsu Shi)*—was completed in March 1927 and appeared in February 1930. Though he was not a party member until 1930, he was an active defender of the 1927 theses and jostled with a number of party critics. The most heated conflicts were with Inomata.¹⁰ (Essentially these were a continuation of the Watanabe-Inomata controversy.) The 1931 theses put him in a difficult position, but he did not alter his views. In fact, he took the initiative in 1931 in organizing a group of like-minded scholars to publish a series of essays on Japanese capitalism in order to revive the 1927 line.¹¹ These essays constitute the famous *Lectures on the History of the Development of Japanese Capitalism (Nihon Shihonshugi Hattatsu Shi Koza)*.^{*} The 1932 theses raised Noro to a position of prominence in the party's central organization, and, after the death of Iwata in November of that year, he was forced to assume increasingly heavy responsibilities for party activities.

* Forty-three issues of the lectures, grouped into seven volumes, were published between May 1932 and August 1933. A close friend of Hirano Yoshitaro, who played a leading role in the publication of the lectures, noting that when the lectures were launched, the text of the 1932 theses was not yet available in Japan, commented: "Some individuals of the advanced part of our proletarian theoretical front were already very close to the theoretical level of the 1932 theses. Those who were engaged in agrarian struggles were becoming highly critical of the line laid down in the draft political theses published under the direction of Kazama Jokichi and others the previous year" (see Moriya Norio, especially p. 2).

Miyamoto's resentment toward Oizumi and Obata and his suspicion that both were police spies intensified factional strife among the party leaders. Miyamoto joined Henmi, Akizasa, Kijima Takaaki, and Hakamada to form a bloc against Oizumi and Obata, and tried to persuade Noro, on the basis of information he collected, that they were police spies. However, Noro would not accept the allegation. The central organization of the party remained the same until after Noro's arrest by the police on November 28, 1933. (He died in jail in 1934.)

After Noro's arrest, Miyamoto and his group intensified their attack on Oizumi and Obata on the ground that they had betrayed Noro to the police. Acting as an "investigation committee," they lured Oizumi and Obata to a hideout on December 23, and in the course of cross-examination brutally tortured them. Obata did not survive the torture, and the inquisitors buried his body under the floor of the hideout. Oizumi, who confessed to being in the service of the Thought Police, survived; he managed to escape and turned himself over to the police on January 15, 1934. Unlike Matsumura, who was not prosecuted by the police, Oizumi was placed under arrest and ultimately sent to prison. During his trial, he disclosed that he had been working for Mori Motoi, chief of the Thought Police, since August 1933.¹²

The two remaining central committee members—Miyamoto and Henmi—and two candidate members—Hakamada and Akizasa—discussed reorganization of the party, deciding that Hakamada and Akizasa would become central committee members and that Kijima, who was a member of the Tokyo committee, would become a candidate member. The members of the central committee were to have the following responsibilities: Miyamoto, head of the Tokyo committee and editor of *Red Flag*; Henmi, finance and peasants; Hakamada, organization and Zenkyo; and Akizasa, Communist Youth League.¹³

The "Red Lynching," as the press called the murder of Obata, was not the only case of violence involving communists in these years. A Korean party member was shot to death as a spy, and another party member was tortured and seriously injured in the summer of 1932. An employee of the party's secret printing plant was questioned and tortured by his superior in December 1933. Two other party members were tortured and killed in February 1934.¹⁴ The "purge" in the party involved innocent as well as guilty members, and had the effect of weakening its organization, instead of strengthening it.

The authorities made maximum use of these incidents to further

discredit the Communist Party in the eyes of the public. However, the police gave up the practice of planting agents in the party organization. Evidently, Chief Mori and others were quite disturbed by the unfortunate results.¹⁵ The police decided instead to deliver a final frontal blow against the party by arresting all suspected communists. Their dragnet caught Miyamoto, Henmi, and Kijima as well as many other party and Zenkyo members.

THE DEFECTION OF SANO AND NABEYAMA

Meanwhile, the Japanese Communist Party had suffered a staggering blow from a totally unexpected quarter. On June 10, 1933, the morning papers carried the news that “two important communists”—Sano Manabu and Nabeyama—had defected from the party. The news stories were based upon a letter dated June 6 that the two party leaders sent to their lawyers and friends. Earlier, at the end of May, they had informed the authorities of their “change of heart” in a long memorandum, which was summarized in their letter. Party members, in and out of jail, were stunned by the news. It seemed incredible that two such “brilliant leaders” could desert the party. As more information became available, it was clear that their defection had been under consideration for some time—that, in fact, soon after receiving sentences of life imprisonment in October 1932, they had decided on this course of action.* The authorities quite naturally were cooperative and accommodating.

Sano and Nabeyama explained in detail the basis of their action in their memorandum to the authorities.¹⁶ They maintained that they had not repudiated their belief in the need “to free the working class from the iron chains of violent capitalism,” but that they repudiated the existing Communist Party as “a petty bourgeois organ, moving fast in the wrong direction.” They claimed that the party was not “a progressive factor in Japanese society,” that it was instead “a negative force,” and that they wanted “to show the right course to the working class.”

What caused them to reject the party? Their answer to this question was rooted in the reawakening of their national consciousness:

* According to an account in *Reconstruction* by Nakano Sumio, Sano was the first to consider defecting. Nakano claimed that two events were particularly upsetting to Sano—the Omori bank incident and the assassination of Prime Minister Inukai. News of the defection was first reported in several Tokyo newspapers on January 26, 1933, but the stories were denied by Sano and Nabeyama (Nakano, pp. 200-204).

Those events of national significance that have confronted our people since the Manchurian Incident . . . have awakened the Japanese consciousness inherent in all of us, communist or not. We are proud of the history of the Japanese people, who, as a great independent nation, have substantially contributed to the development of mankind, and we have come to believe in their superior quality. The critical world political situation, particularly the war situation facing Japan, has aroused our national consciousness.

For this reason, Sano and Nabeyama had come to view the Japanese imperial system in a completely different light from the Comintern and their ex-comrades. Their memorandum continued:

The imperial system of Japan, unlike tsarism, has never been a system of exploitation and suppression. The imperial household has been an expression of national unity; it has reduced class violence within the country, bringing equilibrium to social life and ensuring a smooth transition from one class to another at times of social change. . . . The overwhelming majority of the people respect and identify with the imperial family. The Japanese people have the sense of being a great kinship group, of which the imperial family is the head. . . . To that extent, the Japanese imperial family has a popular foundation. . . . With the slogan "Overthrow the Imperial System," the Communist Party flouts the feelings of the people and for this reason is alienated from them.

According to Sano and Nabeyama, the Comintern did not sufficiently understand that "the form of revolution will vary according to factors peculiar to each country."

The Comintern has very little understanding of the historical traditions, peculiarities of social life, and psychological features of the Japanese nation. It cannot understand them. It has steered Japan toward a theory of class struggle based on European experience, not on Japanese peculiarities. The 1932 theses did not properly explain the political role of the monarchy.

Sano and Nabeyama argued that "traditional and socio-psychological factors must be taken into account in the conduct of revolution." What kind of revolution, then, did they foresee in Japan? Their answer was that "in Japan it is natural and possible to carry out a one-country socialist revolution under the imperial family."

Sano had been leaning toward this position for a number of years. He had opposed the 1922 theses because of the attack on the imperial system and the advocacy of a bourgeois-democratic revolution instead

of a socialist one. Although he was won over to the Comintern view during the period of his residence in Moscow from 1923 to 1925, he continued to believe that the attack against the imperial system created serious difficulties for the Japanese Communist Party, especially with respect to the party's relationship with the masses. Once he began to accept the view that the Japanese imperial system differed from monarchism in general, he could reason that the imperial system was no barrier to proletarian revolution. His conception of a revolution under the emperor was not far removed from the Ronoha conception of proletarian revolution, for the Ronoha did not regard the emperor as central to political power.

The character of the revolution, implicit in Sano's and Nabeyama's statement, was more nationalist than socialist. They asserted:

Today Japan belongs among the great powers of the world. This is the result of (1) firm national unity, expressed in the state and the monarchy; (2) internal social cohesion; (3) the role of the family as the basic social unit; (4) the high productivity of workers; and (5) the cumulative genius of Eastern culture. Japan stands among those nations that lead, not among those that are led. The concepts of independence of colonies and national self-determination are outdated bourgeois concepts; weak nations like Manchuria, Formosa, and Korea should enjoy equal rights under one people's government by merging with Japan, which is economically close to them.

Japan's mission, according to Sano and Nabeyama, extended to China as well and was directed against imperialism. They continued: "The present war is being waged against the Chinese Nationalist military clique, which is the agent of European and American capital and which supports the old order. The objective of the war is the liberation of 400 million Chinese. Since the war involves the expansion of the Japanese nation into a country that is remarkably backward in culture compared to Japan, it is in accord with the principle of historical progress."

Sano and Nabeyama held that the Japanese aggression in China was likely to develop into a Japanese-American war—a war that would be "a progressive step because it will have as its aim the liberation of Asian nations from American and European capital." Conceding that "as a war waged by Japanese imperialists, it could not be called "a war of national liberation," they made the only purely socialist argument in their statement, declaring that "to transform it into a war of national liberation will require internal political reform—the

achievement of a government of working people." However, they said nothing more on this point, except to imply that reform would occur through the arming of the masses.

The two party leaders were also led to their decision to defect by Pan-Asianism. In their words,

There are common characteristics among Asian peoples in language, culture, race, and religion. There is spiritual solidarity among them in their confrontation with Western capitalism. . . . The struggle against Western capitalism, which will develop into a war, will be a progressive step for the peoples of Asia. Japan should be the leader of Pan-Asianism and should unite the peoples of the East on a class basis into one great nation. The West, reorganized by the proletariat, and the East, reconstructed through Pan-Asianism, will ultimately become one.

In a second letter, dated June 8, Sano and Nabeyama expressed much the same views, but they wrote in greater detail and with more feeling. The letter was published in the July issue of *Reconstruction* and created a sensation.¹⁷ Sano and Nabeyama were highly critical of the failure of the Japanese Communist Party to provide leadership for the proletariat. According to them, the party was alien to the working class; it had been infiltrated by intellectuals or radical elements of the petty bourgeoisie who used the communist movement to satisfy personal ambitions. They blamed this situation on "the political and organizational principles of the Comintern, in which we have had unlimited trust," expanding this charge as follows:

We now recognize that we must criticize the Comintern itself. We have concluded that the Comintern has grown remarkably sectarian and bureaucratic. It has become too much of an instrument of the Soviet Union itself. . . . It has catered to the petty bourgeoisie of various countries and has tended to make demagogic propaganda. In the case of the Communist Party of Japan, the Comintern has favored the members of the petty bourgeoisie who talk about revolution over strong-willed workers, has devised arbitrary strategy by confusing its wishes with the actual situation, and has made irresponsible propaganda through obvious lies. In 1926 and the year that followed, when the Japanese Communist Party was beset by petty bourgeois elements within its camp, the Comintern was scathing in its criticism and helped to overcome this deviation by supporting the able worker members of the party. Now, however, when petty bourgeois elements are much more predominant than in those years and are causing tangible and intangible damage to the left-wing labor movement, the Comintern has not said anything about this deviation; instead, to our consternation, it sings the praises of the party. The theoretical analyses by the Comintern of the recent world economic crisis and the subsequent aggravation of conditions have been accurate and worthy of

attention; however, the Comintern has proved to be incapable of leading, as an international revolutionary organization, the practical struggles of workers in many countries. These workers are fighting capitalism independent of the Comintern and its branches.

Sano and Nabeyama pointed out that the Comintern had not convened a congress in five years and had continued to ignore the trend to follow national interests that was developing in various countries. According to them, moreover, the Comintern had made no effort to analyze these trends. Their letter continued:

It is understandable that both the extraordinary development of the Soviet Union and the international crisis have tended to make the Comintern an agency of the Soviet state. But this tendency has unfortunately gone to the extreme of making "Protect the Soviet Union" the supreme and sole slogan of all national parties and of demanding the sacrifice of the interests of the working classes in all countries to that end. This is certainly not conducive to the development of a worldwide workers' movement. The Japanese Communist Party appears to be more involved in providing a defense corps or a propaganda outlet for the Soviet Union than in struggling for the liberation of our working class. . . . We urge the left-wing labor movement of Japan—both the party and the unions—to terminate its relations with the Comintern and to reorganize on a new basis in order to meet impending social changes.

Reiterating that the 1932 theses exemplified the Comintern's practice of applying European, particularly Russian, experience to Japan, Sano and Nabeyama argued that socialism could be achieved in Japan without a conflict between "class" and "nation." They insisted that "a higher level of internationalism" would be achieved through the efforts to construct "one-country socialism" in the major parts of the world. They concluded by predicting the course of Comintern-Chinese Communist relations and the fate of the Comintern itself: "We believe that it is only a matter of time before the comrades in the Chinese soviet government and the Chinese Communist Party agree with us regarding the sectarian and bureaucratic nature of the Comintern, as well as its transformation into an agency of the Soviet state. With the outbreak of a world war, the Comintern will collapse completely."

FURTHER DEFECTIONS

Sano and Nabeyama's views were quickly accepted by many of the communists in jail, and influenced many communists and sympathizers on the outside, helping to pave the way for the dissolution of a number

of left-wing cultural and intellectual organizations. Defection from the party became increasingly common. The concept of "one-country socialism" with separation from the Comintern was appealing to many jailed communists who were frustrated and defeatist because of the difficulty of continuing the movement along the line set by the Comintern. Sano and Nabeyama gave them a new conception of revolution that appeared to be compatible with Japanese society. Unlike the socialists and liberals, there were few conversions in name only (*giso tenko*) among the communist leaders.

Mitamura, Takahashi Sadaki, and Nakao were the first to follow Sano and Nabeyama; they were soon joined by Sugiura, Tanaka Seigen, Sano Hiroshi, Kazama, Iwao, Kawasaki, Tai, and Kodama Shizuko. These defectors formed a "one-country socialist group" in jail and advocated this concept during hearings in the court of appeals. In June 1934, Nakao was freed on bail and joined with Nishimura Saiki to lay the foundation for a legal party movement. They formed a party central committee, drafted socialist theses, and in 1935 launched both a newspaper—*Japan Political News* (*Nihon Seiji Shinbun*) and a theoretical journal—*Advance* (*Zenshin*). However, the movement gained few active participants and was short-lived; it provided nothing new. As Yamakawa pointed out, the socialists were treading the nationalist path, with some, like Akamatsu, moving along it faster than others.¹⁸ The authorities saw no need to ban the party or its publications, especially when Sano and Nabeyama, its spiritual leaders, increasingly emphasized "upholding the imperial family as the central force of the Japanese nation."*

The total number of defectors was substantial. Of the 393 communists in jail who had been convicted, 133, or approximately 35 per cent, defected in the month following the Sano-Nabeyama announcement.¹⁹ According to an official source, of the 741 communists awaiting trial, 469, or approximately 65 per cent, defected by the end of 1934. The motivations for defection, according to this source, were (1) consideration for the feelings of relatives—225 persons or 47.9 per cent; (2) avoidance of detention—68 or 14.5 per cent; (3) national consciousness—65 or 13.9 per cent; (4) disillusionment with communist theory—55 or 11.7 per cent; (5) personal reasons or health—22 or 4.7 per

* When Sano and Nabeyama were released from jail in 1943, they were ready to cooperate with the military and serve "the cause of the emperor." Both served with the Japanese army in Peking. In 1944 it was rumored that the cabinet was planning to send one of them on a secret mission to Yen'an to initiate peace negotiations with the Chinese Communist Party (Johnson, p. 197).

cent; (6) religious beliefs—18 or 3.8 per cent; and (7) miscellaneous, 16 or 3.5 per cent.²⁰ An important secondary factor was encouragement by the authorities, who were willing to suspend indictments in the case of defectors. Prosecutors, when dealing with ideological offenders, tended to look for a change of heart or conversion (*tenko*) that would permit the accused, after investigation and trial, to reenter society as a legal subject.²¹ The authorities had, of course, rejoiced at the defection of Sano and Nabeyama. As one high judicial official put it: "This will mean the complete ruin of the Communist Party in our country. It is far better than a revision of the Peace Preservation Law."²²

The reaction of the Communist Party to the defections was predictable. The central committee announced the expulsion of Sano and Nabeyama in the June 16 issue of *Red Flag*, branding them, among other things, "betrayers, renegades, traitors, spies, provocateurs, and agents of capitalism." Over the next several years, issue after issue of the party organ announced other expulsions with appropriate vitriolic statements. The party could hardly risk attempting to analyze the situation objectively; it tended to fall back upon the simple explanation that petty bourgeois elements that had infiltrated the party were now disclosing their essential nature under stress.²³ As might be expected, the Comintern directed several blasts at the defectors, especially Sano and Nabeyama, branding them "police provocateurs" and charging them with serving the interests of the Japanese army and the imperial system. From Moscow, Katayama, Yamamoto, and Nosaka joined the chorus:

No one will fail to discern that the 'declaration' is nothing but the combined effort of Sano, Nabeyama, and the public prosecutor—that the prosecutor supplied the sentiments to Sano and Nabeyama and that the task of these 'communists' was to color them with 'revolutionary' phraseology, sophism, demagoguery, and abuse borrowed from all sorts of renegades in the past, e.g., Yamakawa, Akamatsu, the group of 'liquidators,' Trotsky, etc.

They called upon Japan's workers, peasants, and revolutionary intellectuals to throw Sano, Nabeyama, and their followers out of their ranks, and declared that "no mercy, no compromise, no halfway attitude can be permitted to these criminal traitors and agents provocateurs."²⁴

Party leadership, reduced essentially to Hakamada and Akizasa, was confronted by a further difficulty: a dissident group composed of Miya-

uchi Isamu, leader of the communist fraction in the National Peasant Union, Yamamoto Aki, fraction leader in the Japan Federation of Consumer Unions, and a small number of their followers who believed that the only way to rebuild the party was to reorganize the party central committee. In their view, the existing leadership had been thoroughly discredited; moreover, they suspected that Hakamada was a police spy. On April 3, 1934, they issued a statement in the name of a "party cell congress" denouncing the central committee as "a haunt of spies." They called for new leadership to rebuild the party, declaring: "We in the cells can no longer trust the central as it is. We appeal for a national congress to enable new elements to rebuild the central." On May 25, they announced the organization of a preparatory committee for a national congress and appealed for the support of party members scattered throughout the country. In July, they launched publication of *The Majority (Tasuha)*, a journal whose name was used generally to designate the group itself.

At best the Majority Faction's central core probably did not exceed half a dozen persons, yet it threw the already weakened party into confusion. Police suppression, however, made expansion difficult, if not impossible. Miyauchi and Yamamoto were arrested in October 1934, and most of their followers were caught in a general roundup of suspicious persons that began in March 1935. Some elements continued to operate in the Osaka area through the Kansai local committee, but after they were criticized by the Comintern in July 1935,²⁵ they decided to dissolve what was left of the organization. Thus ended what one party member later called "a tempest in a teapot."²⁶

Zenkyo, like the Communist Party, steadily lost influence in this period and ultimately was completely destroyed by internal division and police suppression. For one thing, its persistent radicalism made cooperation with moderate labor elements impossible, and alienated it from the mainstream of the Japanese labor movement. It was increasingly apparent that Zenkyo was the instrument of the party. As the party shifted to the strategy dictated by the 1932 theses, Zenkyo's central committee followed the party's lead: in September 1932, it adopted a political action policy aimed at achieving abolition of the monarchy.²⁷ (The political orientation of the central committee was not unopposed, however. For instance, former Renovation League members like Kamiyama Shigeo criticized the union for its failure to help generate a mass struggle on practical grounds, i.e., the everyday demands of workers and revision of the Peace Preservation Law.)²⁸ Zenkyo was unable to avoid factional strife, which was based on the jealousies and

suspicious among the party leaders. The party central committee was determined to punish those in Zenkyo who had connections with Oizumi and Obata. It branded the Zenkyo faction leader Kotaka Tamotsu an agent provocateur and expelled him from the party in March 1934.²⁹ Kotaka maintained his position in Zenkyo and leveled the same charge against his accusers. A major split between party and union could not be avoided, and the party proceeded to form a preparatory committee for a new Kanto regional council. It was the police, however, who delivered the coup de grace. Kotaka and other Zenkyo leaders were arrested in May 1934; the leading figures in the Kanto regional council suffered a similar fate in August and September. Late in 1934 some former Zenkyo members resumed activity and established a committee to rebuild the union. However, after the Comintern adopted the strategy of the popular front in 1935, a majority of the members of the committee gave up the effort and concentrated upon a policy of penetrating the legal labor unions. A minority group that included Kamiyama adhered to the idea of rebuilding Zenkyo. A controversy developed, but the police continued to arrest former Zenkyo members, and by December 1936 there were few left to argue matters of policy.

The situation in the party central committee went from bad to worse. After April 1934 Hakamada was the only central committee member who had managed to avoid arrest. The small group around him continued publication and distribution of *Red Flag* for a while, but was forced to give up in June. The last regular issue was published on June 20; after that date, eight mimeographed issues were published through August 1, 1936.* Hakamada was finally arrested on March 4, 1935. By then the party organization had been completely destroyed.

THE COMINTERN AND THE POPULAR FRONT

The Comintern found it extremely difficult to maintain contact with party elements after 1932. There is no evidence that any Japanese communist went to Moscow, and only a few Kutobe trainees returned

* Terao Toshi, at that time a party member, later described the efforts made to continue publication: "I felt that we had to resume publication of *Red Flag* at any cost to inform the masses that the party continued to exist.... Number 183 dated October 3, 1934, was produced by our group [Terao Toshi, Hakamada, and his wife]. Out of our limited funds, we purchased paper and ink and worked hard to produce some 100 mimeographed copies. Even now I cannot forget how moved I was to see the poorly printed *Red Flag*. In retrospect, it is clear that we were unable to play a significant role in producing only 100 copies and distributing them... through individuals. However, at the time I felt as though we had accomplished something great" (Terao, pp. 235-36).

to Japan in 1934 and 1935.³⁰ The Comintern sent Nosaka to the United States in the spring of 1934 in order to improve communications with Japan.³¹ Operating out of New York City with the help of the American Communist Party,* he dispatched a series of “antiwar” and “antifascist” materials to Japan, including the following titles: “Get Rid of Agitators Against the Party and Smash Those Who Seek To Disrupt It” (July 1934); “The Leaders of the Social Masses Party Are Agents of the Military Clique and Fascism” (November 1934); “What Does the Fascistization of Japan Mean?” (December 1934); “What Is the Revolutionary Proletariat To Do?” (February 1935); “The Imperial System and Fascism” (May 1935); and “The Road to the Liberation of the Working Class” (May 1935).³² As was to be expected, Japanese militarism and the imperial system were attacked in these materials. However, the strongest criticism was reserved for the Social Masses Party, which announced its support of the policy of the Japanese War Ministry—a policy that was outlined in a pamphlet entitled “The True Significance of National Defense—An Appeal for Strengthening It.” This pamphlet, published in October 1934, made clear the army’s determination to centralize the mobilization of Japanese resources for war. Its publication was an indication of the growing influence of national socialist ideology in the military establishment of Japan. In view of the Social Masses Party’s stand, said Nosaka, there was little reason to suggest the possibility of an antifascist united front between the Japanese Communist Party and the Social Masses Party. Nosaka still viewed the united front as essentially a united front from below in labor unions. (Yamamoto Kenzo wrote much the same thing in an article in the April 1935 issue of *Communist International*.)³³

Nosaka returned to Moscow to take part in the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, which convened late in July 1935. The congress—the first in seven years—was held against a background of significant changes in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. Faced with the menacing presence of the Japanese in Manchukuo and the avowed anticommunism of Nazi Germany, the Soviet regime was careful to maintain normal relations with Tokyo and Berlin; however, at the same time, it looked for ways to counter the danger presented by those aggressive states. Thus, the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with the United States in 1933, sought to develop a viable secu-

* Kato Kanju, who was visiting New York on the invitation of an American labor union, met Nosaka there in 1935 and discussed with him the question of a united front. Kato disclosed this bit of information on the occasion of the celebration of Nosaka’s seventieth birthday, March 29, 1962, to the great surprise of those present. See Nosaka Sanzo Shiryo Hensan Iinkai, pp. 59-60.

city system in Eastern Europe in 1934, joined the League of Nations in September 1934, and sold the Chinese Eastern Railway to Japan in March 1935. At the Seventh Congress, the executive committee of the Comintern declared that communist parties everywhere had “to help with all their might and with all the means at their disposal to strengthen the Soviet Union and to fight against the enemies of the Soviet Union.”³⁴

The Seventh Congress established a new policy that remained in effect until the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939. The Comintern called upon communist parties in each capitalist country to create a broad, anti-fascist, popular movement in order to defend “existing democratic liberties against any attack by a fascist movement within the country and to defend national independence against aggressive fascist states.” The Comintern thereby recognized that there was a qualitative difference between democracy and fascism, as two forms of bourgeois rule. In the words of one historian, “Democratic rights and institutions under capitalism, however imperfect in the eyes of communists, were considered beneficial to the working classes . . . and were to be defended by communists and their followers against the onslaught of fascism.”³⁵ However, the ultimate objective of destroying capitalism was not abandoned, only postponed. The chief spokesman for the new line in 1935, the Bulgarian Georgi Dimitrov, made this clear: “We communists have other ultimate aims than the defense of democracy . . . but in struggling for our aims we are ready to fight jointly for any immediate tasks that, when completed, will weaken the position of fascism and strengthen the position of the proletariat.” According to Dimitrov, an antifascist popular movement or front would involve an alliance between a united front of all working-class organizations on the one hand and the peasantry and the middle classes on the other. In other words, the tactic of the “united front from above”—the conclusion of temporary agreements with the social democratic leaders in the proletarian movement in order to achieve limited goals—was to be revived. However, the Seventh Congress, in its report, insisted upon the necessity of the ultimate violent overthrow of capitalism by means of a communist-led revolution and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Dimitrov specifically denied that the popular front was a transitional form to socialism and communism that would make a proletarian revolution unnecessary.³⁶

The Japanese participants in the Seventh Comintern Congress—Yamamoto Kenzo, Nosaka, and Kobayashi Yonosuke, a young Kutobe trainee who had gone to Moscow from Hamburg a few years before—

endorsed the new line, although they still tended to emphasize the united front from below. During a discussion on the "Report of the Executive Committee," Nosaka commented that "our main goal is the united front and unification of the trade unions of every persuasion" and pointed out that "this demands intense work by the communists in the reformist and reactionary trade unions."³⁷ In a speech to the congress, Nosaka characteristically exaggerated the strength of the communist movement in Japan, but he conceded that the party suffered from factional division and appealed for dissolution of the Majority Faction.³⁸ Yamamoto, who also spoke at the congress, seems to have come nearer to the idea of a popular front, but what he proposed was still closely related to a united front from below.³⁹

Even before the Seventh Congress, the Comintern had begun to apply the new line to Japan. In the July 5th issue of *Communist International*, it called on the Japanese communists to go beyond "the struggle of unity from below" and cooperate with "those organizations of working-class composition that are in the anticommunist camp." The Comintern referred specifically to the Social Masses Party, although it conceded that "the chances are very small that a united front with the workers organized in the Social Masses Party will be established by means of negotiations with the leaders of that party." According to the Comintern, there was "much dissatisfaction with the treacherous policy of those leaders. . . . Among the lower and middle functionaries of the Social Masses Party there are some who can be won over to the side of class struggle." The Comintern described the proper tactics to be used in order to achieve the united front:

The Social Masses Party has recently been issuing demagogic declarations on labor legislation, on relief for the peasants and against the system of employing temporary workers. But the only method of attaining these demands, according to the central committee of the Social Masses Party, is to send petitions and delegations consisting of members of the Social Masses Party's central committee to cabinet ministers, the Diet, and other organs of the monarchist regime. The communists can accept these demagogical demands of the central committee of the Social Masses Party, which are in accordance with the interests of the masses. They should be regarded as a minimum basis for the organization of a joint struggle of working-class and peasant organizations against the capitalists and landlords. They should be regarded as the minimum that can be presented to the government by those engaged in this united front. Only one condition should be advanced, viz., that the broad masses be drawn into the movement for these demands and that a mass movement be developed for their demands.

The Comintern suggested what forms such a mass movement might take: mass meetings; discussion of demands at meetings of workers' and peasants' organizations, individual factory groups, workers' clubs, etc.; the sending of mass delegations to present the demands accepted at such meetings to the government; and discussion at mass meetings of the reports of these delegates and the action of the government. According to the Comintern, if the central committee of the Social Masses Party declined to join in a united front and if the Communist Party did its work ably, the drive for a united front would not be hindered. On the contrary, the rejection of the offer by the leaders "will foster the establishment of a united front with the local Social Masses Party organizations and its youth division, as well as the establishment of a united front of the mass nonparty working-class organizations."⁴⁰

The implications of the Comintern's new popular front line for the communist movement in Japan were analyzed in detail by Nosaka and Yamamoto in a statement dated February 10, 1936. The statement was in the form of "A Letter to the Japanese Communists,"* and was published in a special edition of *International News* (*Kokusai Tsushin*).† The Nosaka-Yamamoto letter began by proposing the same strategy called for in the 1927 and 1932 theses:

Our Communist Party aims at establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat after first completing a bourgeois-democratic revolution. This basic policy is the correct policy, for a number of feudal remnants still exist in modern Japan. There is the military-police-emperor system and the parasitic semifeudal system of landownership. Moreover, feudal remnants exist in labor-capital relations and premeate social life and family relations. The continued existence of these remnants of feudalism necessitates first struggling for the fulfillment of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

The tactics, however, were to be changed in accordance with the resolutions of the Comintern's Seventh Congress. In the letter the "fascist military" were identified as the "major enemy against whom we must wage war." The military were "the most reactionary and the most

* The full text of the letter appears as Appendix G, pp. 352-61.

† *International News* was established by Nosaka upon his return to the United States after the end of the Seventh Congress. Assisted by the American Communist Party and a few Japanese sympathizers, he published it on the West Coast as a means of maintaining communication with the Japanese communists and the Japanese people as a whole. As a result of Nosaka's operations, the influx of communist propaganda, smuggled into Japan by seamen, increased markedly during the next few years. For example, some 56 different communications were discovered by the police in 1936 (Home Ministry, *Showa* 1936, pp. 50-51. See also Swearingen and Langer, pp. 61-62, 65).

barbaric imperialists within the structure of the imperial system.” According to Nosaka and Yamamoto, the military, particularly the extreme elements, were not satisfied with the existing government and were anxious to establish a military-fascist dictatorship. They urged the communists not to underestimate the danger of such a dictatorship, arguing that

the fact that Japanese fascism does not have its own mass political party decreases the dangerous nature of the fascists very little. The imperial system, especially the power that the military has in state affairs, makes it possible for Japanese fascism to triumph through the dictatorship of military fascists. The military has dictatorial control over the army and the navy and will expand its influence not only among the exploiting classes but among the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie in the cities and farm villages. Penetrating the workers, it has succeeded in winning over a number of labor unions. The present reactionary government, despite some differences of opinion with the aggressive fascist elements in the military, is paving the way for a dictatorship of the military fascists.

According to Nosaka and Yamamoto, “the only way to save the people from the horror of fascism and war” was to take the lead in creating a “great national movement based on the united action of the working class and on an antifascist popular front.” They suggested that the main political slogans of the national movement ought to be: “Opposition to Reaction and the Menace of Military-Fascist Dictatorship,” “Establishment of a Democratic Japan with Power in the Hands of the People,” and “Convocation of a People’s Constitutional Assembly Elected by Universal, Equal, Direct, and Secret Vote of All Adults and Having Supreme Power.”

Nosaka and Yamamoto directed the communists and their supporters to join the legal labor unions and peasant unions; these organizations should then be led to join the Social Masses Party. Their letter continued:

Within these organizations, [the communists] should strive to lead a majority of the members and the whole organization in the direction of the class struggle and the left-wing current and thereby establish an anti-fascist popular front of the proletariat organized both centrally and at the local level. In addition, communists should fight in mass organizations like the Levelers Society, industrial unions, peace organizations, youth corps, and veterans’ associations in order to win over the masses of the members and the local branches to a popular front opposed to fascism, reaction, and war. While keeping close contact with the left-wing elements in the Social Masses Party, communists should fight against the party’s reactionary leaders and strive to isolate them.

The approach to the masses, including the petty bourgeoisie, should be based upon their immediate economic interests, which should be linked to opposition to the military, an attack on fascism, and a demand for democracy. Specifically, a broad national movement should be launched in opposition to such feudal systems and institutions as trafficking in women and juveniles, enforced boarding of "hundreds of thousands of women spinners and mine workers," barracks living for bondmen, subcontracting "for double exploitation," employment on a temporary basis, and "colonial low wages," as well as general opposition to "the absence and disregard of the rights of workers." Nosaka and Yamamoto declared that the form and the demands of the struggle need not be the most radical possible, but that "they must be of such a nature as to arouse the concern of the broad masses and cause them to take united action."

A number of changes in tactics that went well beyond cooperation with other left-wing elements were proposed in the letter. Nosaka and Yamamoto suggested the possibility of a joint struggle in the rural areas "involving all the farming population," including a certain number of wealthy farmers and very small landlords. Concerning this course of action, they wrote:

It is now possible and indeed necessary to form a front comprising the whole farming population in order to struggle against debts, heavy taxes, fertilizer and electricity charges, and other monopoly prices that enslave peasants, and to fight for prompt state relief for peasants suffering from hunger and destitution. Our task is to develop the class struggle of the rural proletariat—the struggle to reduce tenancy rents and prevent tenant dispossession, as well as the struggle for the general demands of the peasants. Our task is to oppose reaction and fascism and unite the broad masses of peasants into a single popular front that will fight for land, peace, and freedom.

Similarly, they proposed that the working class seek to win over small merchants, small industrialists, and the intelligentsia:

The working class must advance and defend the urgent demands of the petty bourgeoisie and working intelligentsia and show that only when they advance along with the working class can they be saved from the violent assaults of big monopoly capitalism, from the heavy burden of debts and ruin, from unemployment in the case of professionals, and from the violence of the fascists and the pressure exerted on culture and sciences.

The urgent demands of the urban petty bourgeoisie are: a moratorium on debts, low-interest loans without collateral, tax reduction for small

tradesmen and industrialists, and opposition to low taxes for big capitalists and department stores. In this connection, the demand for state aid for small tradesmen and industrialists on the verge of bankruptcy must be linked to a movement demanding the curtailment of military expenditures. The demands of the working intelligentsia are: freedom for study, creative expression, and cultural activities; guaranteed employment of office workers, employees of city, town, and village governments, and professionals; salaries related to increased living costs; and freedom to organize labor unions and participate in political movements.

In conclusion, Nosaka and Yamamoto called upon their Japanese colleagues to strengthen the Communist Party "ideologically, politically, and organizationally" and to overcome the factionalism that, in their words, "makes party activity passive, causes the party to abandon struggles for the masses, and leads the party ranks to corruption." They cautioned their comrades to carry on the struggle against "those who attempt to draw the party into the mud of right-wing opportunism or to the side of social democracy." The popular front was, after all, only a tactic designed to meet the current situation, and, as noted already, their interpretation of it was still close to the concept of the united front from below.

SUPPRESSION OF INDIVIDUAL COMMUNIST GROUPS

The only group of Japanese communists that had a chance, however slight, to attempt to implement the new Comintern policy centered around the remnants of the Kansai local committee. It included Kuwabara Rokuro, Wada Yosaji, Fujii Hideo, Kawakami Kanichi, and Tatsumi Tsuneyo, who formed a preparatory committee for the reconstruction of a central organization for the party. By September 1936 the committee had created a new national organization, with some support in labor unions and peasant associations. It also revived *Red Flag*, publishing a mimeographed issue in July 1936. Within a few months, however, the omnipresent police moved against the group. On December 5, they rounded up some 1,300 suspected members in 35 prefectures; 235 were subsequently indicted.⁴¹

Several smaller groups managed to survive the December crackdown, but they, too, were ultimately crushed by the police. Kasuga, released from prison after serving a nine-year sentence, Takenaka Tsunesaburo, and others formed a Japanese Communist Band (*Nihon Kyosanshugisha Dan*) in Osaka on December 5, 1937, which was committed to opposing military aggression in China and military dictator-

ship in Japan. They launched two organs—*Voice of the People* (*Minshu no Koe*), in April 1938, and *Against the Storm* (*Arashio Tsuite*), in June 1938. They also issued a pamphlet—*Party Builders* (*To Ken-seetsusha*)—calling for reestablishment of the Communist Party. The police put an end to their activities by arresting 158 members of the group on September 13, 1938.⁴² Kobayashi Yonosuke, the young Kuto-be trainee who had participated in the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, returned to Japan from Moscow in July 1936. He made contact with Kasuga and his comrades, but found it impossible to operate effectively. He planned to go to Shanghai, but was arrested in December 1937.⁴³ Kamiyama Shigeo, who was released from jail in December 1936 after pledging to abandon all interest in communism, Sato Shuichi, Kamiyama Toshio, Terada Mitsugu, Hasegawa Hiroshi, Okabe Ryuji, and Ito Ritsu constituted another communist party rebuilding committee. It was active until May 1941, when the last of its members and supporters, about 70 in all, were rounded up.⁴⁴

Members of the far left of the legal proletarian movement made the only serious attempt to create a popular front against the tide of militarism. They were encouraged by reports of European popular front movements that appeared in left-wing journals. The elements involved in this effort included the leaders of Zenno, the National Council of Japanese Labor Unions (Zempyo), which had been formed in November 1934, and some Ronoha members who had taken a renewed interest in politics.* Foremost among them was Kato Kanju. Kato had left the National Labor-Farmer Masses Party shortly before it merged with the Social Democratic Party to form the Social Masses Party in 1932, and he had taken the lead in the formation of Zempyo. In both cases, he acted, in his words, “in opposition to fascist tendencies.” He was a popular figure in the left-wing movement, and in the 1936 election he was elected to the Diet with more votes than any other socialist candidate.

One especially important stimulus to the popular front movement was the exclusion of Zempyo from the new All-Japan General Federation of Labor (Zen Nihon Rodo Sodomei) in January 1936, which was the result of a merger of Sodomei and the National Labor Union League. Zempyo leaders felt that the right wing of the labor move-

* Zempyo represented the opposition of leftist unionists to the “rightist leadership” of the Social Masses Party. Although these dissident unionists had refrained from setting up a new political party, they had established a new labor federation that evolved into Zempyo. Its leaders included Kato, Suzuki Mosaburo, Takano Minoru, and Takatsu (Colbert, pp. 40-41).

ment, like the Social Masses Party, was moving further in the direction of cooperation with the military, and that it was necessary to organize an opposition force. Zempyo joined such groups as the Tokyo Municipal Employees Union, the Tokyo Traffic Workers Union, the Japan Federation of Consumers Associations, the Kanto Factory Workers Federation, the Automobile Workers Union, and the National Peasants Union to hold a labor-farmer assembly. In May 1936, they formed the Labor-Farmer Proletarian Council (Rono Musan Kyogikai). The new council registered as a political organization but found it difficult to operate because of the declaration of martial law following an attempted army coup on February 26. Ronoha elements, including Suzuki Mosaburo, Arahata, and Takatsu, set to work in July to formulate strategy and tactics for an antifascist popular front, consulting closely with Yamakawa and Inomata. Meanwhile, Kato and his followers worked to effect a merger with the Social Masses Party in order to strengthen the popular front. When the Social Masses Party rejected the notion as communist-inspired, the Labor-Farmer Proletarian Council denounced the party as fascist and formed the Japan Proletarian Party (Nihon Musanto) in February 1937 with Kato as chairman and Suzuki as secretary-general.⁴⁵ The new party registered 7,000 members and set up local branches. Kato campaigned for a Diet seat with a call for a popular front in the April 1937 election, and was returned once more; Suzuki, taking a similar position, was defeated. The left-wing made a surprisingly good showing in the election, increasing its vote from the approximately 500,000 votes won in the February 1936 election to over a million. As a result, proletarian representation jumped from 23 to 36 members.⁴⁶

The election results and the outbreak of full-scale hostilities between Japan and China in July 1937 persuaded the Japanese authorities that they had to move against noncommunist left-wing elements as well as the communists. They took the position that the popular front policy was based on communism.⁴⁷ The police moved against the Japan Proletarian Party and Zempyo in December 1937, dissolving them and arresting some 400 members and sympathizers. Among those arrested were Kato, Suzuki, Arahata, Takatsu, Kobori, Yamakawa, Inomata, and Kuroda. They were later tried and sentenced to jail terms ranging from two to five years.* Not unexpectedly, the Social

* Totten has pointed out that the government prosecutor changed his accusations against the Ronoha members twice. "At first he charged that the faction was following orders from the Comintern transmitted by the Chinese Communist Kuo Mo-jo, who had visited

Masses Party was quick to deny any relationship with the dissolved organizations. Colbert has pointed out that "after the suppression of the Japan Proletarian Party and its affiliated organizations, militarism, for all practical purposes, ceased to be an issue within the proletarian movement, and the statements of the Social Masses Party and the trade unions, like those of other parties and groups, became even more fulsome in their praise of the holy war." A few years later, in June 1940, the Social Masses Party, completely under the control of the nationalists, announced its decision to dissolve in order to help promote the formation of a new comprehensive political party under the leadership of Prime Minister Konoe.⁴⁸

The police also cracked down on leftists in the academic world. In July 1936 they arrested many of the Marxist scholars who took part in preparing the *Lectures on the History of the Development of Japanese Capitalism*. In all, some 30 scholars were indicted. In February 1938, they jailed several of the Ronoha scholars as well, charging them with violation of the Peace Preservation Law. The suppression of left-wing groups continued in 1939 and 1940; by this time the police made little distinction between communists and noncommunists. Ito Ritsu was arrested in November 1939 and charged with being the chief organizer of a new Proletarian Youth League in the Kanda district of Tokyo. (Ito would later provide information that led to the uncovering of the Sorge spy ring.)* One group of 45 persons was smashed by the police in May 1940;⁴⁹ another 90 persons were arrested the following month, including a student group at Tokyo Imperial University;⁵⁰

Japan in 1936. After a short investigation this charge was dropped. Then the Prosecutor alleged that it was a secret organization set up to alter the national polity and reject the system of private property, thus violating the Peace Preservation Law of 1925. His position was that the program of this secret group was the blurb Yamakawa had written in the first issue of *Labor-Farmer* in 1927 giving the reasons for establishing the magazine, and that subsequent policy was expressed in disguised form (or Aesopian language) in the pages of that journal. However, this charge, too, was dropped and a new one leveled: that although the Labor-Farmer faction was not a secret organization, still its adherents were Marxists, and as such had the long-range aim of altering the national polity and denying the system of private property. The cases were tried in the summer of 1942 and sentences of one or more years of hard labor were handed down, but they were then appealed to the Supreme Court, which, however, was obliterated by bombs in 1945 before the cases were finally settled" (Interview with Yamakawa cited in Totten, p. 171n).

* Ito informed the police that he suspected that a woman member of the Japanese section of the American Communist Party had returned to Japan. Her arrest led ultimately to one Miyagi Yotoku, another member of the American Communist Party who was also a key member in the Sorge ring. Miyagi was arrested in October 1941, and under torture confessed all (Johnson, pp. 175-80, and Deakin and Storry, pp. 248-52). For Ito's postwar career as a communist, his disappearance after a purge in 1950, and the charge that he was a police spy, see Johnson, pp. 217-26.

some 60 persons were jailed in the Kansai area.⁵¹ The arrest of Kamiyama and the last of his comrades in 1941 completes the list; by the time the Pacific War broke out, there was no left-wing movement or organization in Japan.

SURVIVAL OF COMMUNISM

Although the authorities were able to crush one communist group after another, a hard core of former party leaders clung tenaciously to their beliefs. They were therefore kept in jail, even after they had served their sentences. Under a modified Peace Preservation Law that went into effect March 10, 1941, the authorities had the power to detain "thought criminals" who had failed to give sufficient evidence of reform "in order to prevent further offenses by them." The revision of the law was directed mainly against the communists. Among the hard core were Tokuda, Shiga, Miyamoto, Kasuga, Konno, and Hakamada; all were to play key roles in the development of the communist movement in the postwar period. Others, including Ichikawa Shoichi and Kokuryo, did not survive the difficult conditions of prison life.

Their comrade Nosaka had returned to Moscow sometime in 1937, where he found Yamamoto Kenzo under arrest, a victim of Stalin's purge.⁵² Frustrated by his inability to establish liaison with the communists in Japan and disappointed with the lack of Soviet interest in the Japanese movement, Nosaka decided to return to Japan via Yenan, the headquarters of the Chinese communists.⁵³ After a long and dangerous trip, he arrived in Yenan in April 1940, where he stayed for five years. He took over direction of psychological warfare against Japanese forces in North China, especially indoctrination of Japanese prisoners, and he prepared analytical studies on the military, political, and economic situation in Japan. By July 1943, he began to feel that Japan's defeat was imminent and that her defeat would enable the progressive forces led by the Communist Party to establish a free and democratic society.⁵⁴ With that end in mind, Nosaka played the leading role in a Japanese People's Emancipation League that was set up at Yenan early in 1944 in order to provide the nucleus of a united front movement for postwar Japan.⁵⁵ When United States government observers arrived in Yenan in the summer of 1944, Nosaka worked to impress them with the potential of the league as a vehicle for the democratization of Japan.⁵⁶

During the Seventh Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in

April 1945, Nosaka summarized Japan's "long history of liberalism" and pointed to the presence of "progressive forces" led by the Communist Party. He emphasized that these forces had continued to struggle against fascism and were now ready to shoulder the burden of democratization.⁵⁷ This approach was based upon a strategy for transforming Japanese society that Nosaka had formulated during the war years. He envisaged a three-stage program leading from the destruction of the feudal-militaristic order through a bourgeois-democratic revolution to the ultimate establishment of a socialist state.⁵⁸ In the first stage, following Japan's defeat, the government would be democratized by revision of the constitution. This revision would provide for universal suffrage; a sovereign Diet to which the cabinet would be responsible; abolition of the powers of the emperor, the Privy Council, and the House of Peers; and guarantee of civil liberties. The government would be composed of representatives of all democratic groups, including the communists. There would also be important economic changes. The armaments industry would be liquidated, industrialization intensified and diversified, and agriculture mechanized. Large-scale monopolies would be nationalized, the property of absentee landlords would be purchased by the state and made available to poor peasants on easy terms, and workers would be free to organize and strike. These would be the objectives of the Japanese Communist Party, which would cooperate with any individuals or groups, including capitalists, who would subscribe to these objectives. What the first two stages involved was the liquidation of feudal remnants and the achievement of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. The last stage, relegated by Nosaka to the distant future, would involve the complete liquidation of capitalism and the transition to socialism. According to Nosaka, this transition, would be gradual and peaceful unless the monopoly capitalists somehow managed to achieve a position of dominance. In that event, violent revolution might occur.

Nosaka's gradualism extended to his attitude toward the emperor. He emphasized the necessity of making a distinction between the political and religious aspects of the imperial system and between the imperial lineage and the reigning emperor. He was adamant in emphasizing the need to "abolish the imperial system immediately . . . and institute a democratic system," but he acknowledged that as a semireligious symbol, the monarchy was deeply rooted in the minds of the Japanese masses. According to Nosaka, "the broad masses who would naturally come to our camp if we do not raise the slogan of

overthrowing the emperor would stay away from us merely because of our raising such a slogan, and such a move would present the danger of our being isolated from the masses." He went on:

Our demands cannot be realized against the wishes of the majority of our people. If the majority of our people fervently demand the perpetuation of the monarchy, we must accede to their demands. Therefore we suggest that the question of retaining or abolishing the emperor be decided after the war by plebiscite. However, if the outcome of the plebiscite is perpetuation of the monarchy, the emperor must be without power.

Of Hirohito, the reigning emperor, Nosaka said: "Having sanctioned the war with Britain and the United States by imperial rescript . . . and having been increasingly made use of by the militarists for appeals to popular patriotism, he cannot escape responsibility for and identification with the war and therefore . . . he must at least abdicate and might even be tried as a war criminal."

When Nosaka learned of the decision in May 1943 to dissolve the Comintern, he wrote that he felt as if a great burden had been lifted from the shoulders of the Japanese communists. He declared:

I, a representative of the Japanese Communist Party, am in complete agreement with the decision to dissolve the Comintern as recently proposed by the presidium, and recognize that such a proposal is timely. . . . Although the Japanese Communist Party has not been directed by the Comintern for some time, it has continued its struggle without committing any great errors. This proves that we can conduct the struggle properly even when we are not aided by the Comintern. The dissolution of the Comintern has now freed us from some old rules and resolutions and has given us opportunities to demonstrate our originality and to implement bold new policies related to our national interests. Moreover, with the dissolution of the Comintern, the Japanese party will enjoy a more favorable position for recruiting the working masses and unifying other workers' organizations. Some progressive workers have not cooperated with the party because they were concerned about the relationship between it and the Comintern. This obstacle no longer exists. It will be easy to connect these progressive workers with the party.

In brief, the dissolution of the Comintern has given impetus to the nationalization of the Japanese Communist Party and the development of struggles against war and against the fascist military. . . . As a result of the dissolution of the Comintern, I deeply feel the need for the Japanese Communist Party to cooperate more closely with Asian countries, especially China. While I am here in Yenan, I will strive to establish this cooperation with our Chinese comrades.⁵⁹

Nosaka returned to Japan at the end of the war and rejoined his old comrades. He left Yen-an in September 1945 and worked his way slowly through North China, Manchuria, and Korea. En route he learned that in early October the American Occupation authorities had abolished the Peace Preservation Law and had proclaimed that Japan's citizens were free to criticize the imperial system. He heard also that Tokuda, Shiga, Kasuga, Hakamada, Miyamoto, and other communist leaders had been released from prison. He was, of course, more eager than ever to set foot on Japanese soil. By the time that he arrived in Japan in early January 1946, the Japanese Communist Party had been reorganized, with a registered membership of more than 1,000, and had held its Fourth Congress—the first in 19 years. A new era for the party had begun.

THE JAPANESE COMMUNIST PARTY: A GENERAL ESTIMATE

The history of the prewar Japanese Communist Party can be characterized by two main features. The first is the cyclical pattern of the rise and fall of party leadership and organization. There were three major cycles in the life of the party in the period down to 1945: (1) the first communist group and party from 1921 to 1924, (2) the second group and party from 1925 to 1929, and (3) the third group and party from 1930 to 1932. After 1932, the communist movement can no longer be considered a movement led by an organized political party; its subsequent history centers around small groups of communists, rarely united and often in conflict with each other. Each of these cycles had its periods of hope and expectation, defeat and despair, suppression and destruction. The second major feature of the history of the Japanese Communist Party is, paradoxically, a kind of continuity that transcends the cyclical pattern. This continuity had its roots in ideology, particularly the strategy of the two-stage revolution; perhaps even more, it was rooted in the undaunted commitment and determination of that small hard core of party leaders who, despite the hardships of long prison terms, refused to join the growing number of communists and socialists who compromised with Japanese nationalism and state socialism in the 1930's. Although the prewar political record of Japanese communism was overwhelmingly one of failure, this continuity contributed to the party strength and cohesion in the immediate post-war years.

The history of the Japanese Communist Party is more than just a

record of a secret and subversive political organization and movement. It encompasses a study of the intellectual impact of Marxism-Leninism on a society that, however conservative, was well along in the process of modernization. The Japanese Communist Party, as the single most important propagator of Marxism and Marxism-Leninism in prewar Japan, had an influence that far transcended its political power and position. This important aspect of the history of the party has to be seen against the background of the diffusion in Japan of socialist thought, especially Marxism, beginning in the late 1890's and continuing in the early decades of the twentieth century. Marxism-Leninism took root in Japan in the period following the Russian Revolution and World War I, when it began to supplant anarcho-syndicalism as the major ideological foundation of revolutionary socialism and as the basis of socialist strategy and tactics. By then the Japanese state was moving toward responsible cabinet-party government, with party leaders replacing the oligarchs, or *genro*, as the political elite in the conservative Japanese power structure. At the same time, the modernization process, especially industrialization and urbanization, was creating new forces that were demanding fundamental changes. Intellectuals and labor leaders called for universal suffrage as a means of striking a balance between imperial sovereignty, party government, and democratic rights, and for recognition of labor's right to organize, bargain, and strike as a means of checking the abuses of capitalism. Some among them envisaged a revolutionary reconstruction of Japanese society. They were encouraged by the growing popular discontent, which appeared to them to be symptomatic of a deep and widespread unrest among the Japanese people, especially the urban labor force. A few saw the Rice Riots of 1918 and the increasingly frequent and violent strikes as foreshadowing revolution.

Japan's revolutionary intellectuals, mostly recent university graduates and young self-educated labor leaders, were motivated by strong humanitarian feelings and a sense of justice. They yearned to go beyond the objectives of liberals like Yoshino Sakuzo and of social democrats like Abe Isoo; they wanted a thorough reform of Japanese society for the benefit of all Japanese. They developed a sense of mission that exuded the energy and enthusiasm of youth. They were determined to build "a new, more rational society in Japan," and were easily seduced by the Marxist proposition that through the dialectic process progress was inevitable. Dialectical materialism gave them a scientific methodology that they could use in analyzing Japanese society, as well as general principles of strategy for effecting change. It explained the tran-

sition from feudalism to capitalism and from capitalism to socialism. Moreover, Marxism satisfied their desire to catch up and surpass the Western nations. Young intellectuals were challenged by the possibility of achieving socialism before any of the nations of the Western world. In addition, Marxism was compatible with the cultural synthesis on which Japan's modern intellectuality and academic system were based. Building on Japan's tradition of Confucian scholarship and on transplanted German idealism and scholasticism, Marxism seemed to provide a modern integrated system of philosophy. Many Japanese intellectuals believed that Marxism had made social science into a unified philosophy or system that could cut across the disciplines. As a Japanese scholar has pointed out, it "provided a methodology for analyzing social phenomena in comprehensive terms" and "aroused intellectuals to study the many diverse elements that have gone into the historical background of Japan and to seek the fundamental causative factors that generated them." Unfortunately, however, as that same scholar has noted, Marxist intellectuals put too much faith in theories: "Theories were too often mistakenly identified with reality itself."⁶⁰

Some of these intellectuals and labor leaders, most of whom had been anarcho-syndicalists, became Marxist-Leninists after the Russian Revolution, when the theories of Lenin and the knowledge of the transformation of Russia under Soviet leadership were disseminated throughout Japan. Along with the older revolutionary socialists like Sakai, Arahata, and Yamakawa, they comprised the membership of the first Japanese Communist Party established in 1922. They came to believe that the strategy and tactics of communism were more flexible and practical than anarcho-syndicalism. The older party leaders found it difficult to overcome their anarcho-syndicalist heritage. However, the failure of the direct action tactics of anarcho-syndicalism both in Japan and abroad convinced them of the need for political action. Moreover, they also became aware of the need for a broader socialist movement than one based on labor alone. In their view, the Russian Revolution demonstrated that Marxism-Leninism was the "science of successful revolution." Given the record of failure of the socialist and labor movements in the previous several decades, the revolution had a great impact on Japan's revolutionaries, old and young alike. Marxism-Leninism also strengthened and deepened the revolutionaries' sense of mission through its concept of the vanguard, the leadership group of the masses.

Despite their exuberance and dedication, Japan's communists never

realized their goals; in fact, they never became a serious threat to the modern state structure that was being built by Japan's dominant conservative forces. The communists, like the socialists, were only dissidents on the fringes of society; they never became a mass force. The conservative groups guided the process of modernization and at the same time were able to maintain the traditional Japanese value system that helped sustain their power. Education, religion, the civil code, and social and business standards of conduct all emphasized the virtues of loyalty, obedience, and status at the expense of freedom, individual rights, and equality. The patriarchal family system pervaded almost every political, economic, and social group, determined patterns of behavior in them, and caught up all Japanese in the web of obligation. To try to break free from this system meant rejection by society and shame for one's family. Shame was the ultimate sanction to maintain social conformity; it played a powerful role in the decision of many communists and socialists to defect in the 1930's. The value system and patterns of behavior tended to prevent basic antagonisms from becoming open clashes and to maintain an operative harmony and stability.

The communists, moreover, could not overcome the powerful integrating and binding force of modern Japanese nationalism, and Confucianism, especially as expressed in the imperial system and the person of the emperor. Communist ideology was alien; moreover, the communists depended for support on a foreign movement and a foreign state that had long been the enemy of Japan and was still a competitor in East Asia and the Pacific. In contrast to the other communist movements in Asia, Japanese communism was incompatible with nationalism. It gained some support for a brief period in the early 1920's, when internationalism had some hold on Japan's intellectuals and political leaders, but in the 1930's, as the forces of militarism and statism grew stronger and ultimately dominant, nationalism swept everything before it, including important segments of the socialist and communist movements.

The absolute power of the state, especially in its rawest form—the police and the military—was something that the communists could not combat effectively. They had no civil liberties with which to protect themselves, either as individuals or as members of a political organization. Like the revolutionary socialists before them, they suffered constant harassment and suppression at the hands of whatever political elite was dominant. *Genro*, party politicians, and militarists

alike suppressed the revolutionary socialists and the communists once their theories left the academy and became agents for change among the masses. Arrest and dissolution were the major weapons used to break communist and communist-front organizations. The Communist Party organization was crushed through mass arrests in 1923, 1928, 1929, and even more regularly during the 1930's. It was simply impossible to create and maintain a large underground apparatus that could function effectively. Furthermore, the state's use of police spies sowed seeds of suspicion and dissension in communist organizations, further weakening them. After the outbreak of hostilities in China in 1937, the Japanese government no longer tolerated Marxism even as an academic theoretical system.

While suppressing the communist movement, the state began to make concessions to the moderate left in 1923, and after 1925 used the socialist movement as a safety valve. Suppression and concession—"whip and candy"—were best symbolized by the almost simultaneous passage by the Diet of the Peace Preservation and Universal Manhood Suffrage laws in the spring of 1925. It is significant that the Peace Preservation Law was used primarily, if not almost exclusively, against communism or communist influence.* The government tolerated the existence of an evolutionary socialist movement, even though its long-range goals were hardly less detrimental to the Japanese power structure and economic and social order.

The Japanese communists and the socialists alike were handicapped by the lack of a strong unified labor movement. The Japanese labor movement was deeply divided by personal and ideological rivalries; moreover, it was characterized by local particularism. Nor was the labor movement ever able to secure large-scale mass support and participation; only a small segment of the industrial force entered unions. In the mid-1920's, for example, only some 6 per cent of Japan's industrial and mining workers were in unions. These workers came largely from small and medium industries, especially metalworking and printing; major industries like textiles, railways, electrical manufacturing, and mining were hardly touched. The Japanese labor move-

* Arrests and prosecutions under the 1925 Peace Preservation Law, 1928-37:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Arrests</i>	<i>Prosecutions</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Arrests</i>	<i>Prosecutions</i>
1928	3,426	530	1933	14,624	1,285
1929	4,942	339	1934	3,994	469
1930	6,124	461	1935	1,772	113
1931	10,422	314	1936	1,645	159
1932	13,938	646	1937	1,291	210

ment was therefore diffuse and weak. The typical Japanese industrial worker did not rebel against the paternalistic labor-management system, and those who did were generally disillusioned with unionism as a result of the constant failure of negotiations and strikes. The record of failure hung like a pall over the labor movement. The mass of Japan's industrial workers rejected political action, let alone the use of revolutionary tactics. They wanted no part of unionism or left-wing political parties.

The peasant movement, another major concern of both the communists and the socialists, suffered from similar weaknesses and difficulties. That movement, too, was badly split. Moreover, the peasant organizations lacked strong central leadership; effective power rested with the leaders of district groups. The communists never had sufficient manpower to work effectively in the peasant movement, nor could they risk exposure, a danger that was much greater in the countryside than in the cities. The peasant movement, like the labor movement, was handicapped by a lack of numbers. At its peak, it had the support and participation of only some 10 per cent of Japan's peasant families. Japan's agricultural community was more than unreceptive; it was openly hostile to communism and even to socialism. As Totten has pointed out, "though this [hostility] can be attributed largely to the landowning gentry's active efforts to keep out 'unsettling' influences, it was also a reaction against industrialism, which appeared to the peasants to be ultimately responsible for their woes."⁶¹ In the final analysis, it was hardly likely that the communists could organize a strong peasant base in a modern society. This was not China; a communist-oriented peasant movement in Japan was too easily suppressed.

In simple terms, the very nature of Japanese society made it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a communist movement to exist, let alone to operate with any degree of effectiveness. In Marxist-Leninist terms, the objective conditions were not at all favorable. But there is more to the story than that. The Japanese communists suffered from a number of weaknesses and difficulties—of Comintern making as well as their own. Again, in the jargon of Marxism-Leninism, the subjective conditions were hardly favorable either. The Comintern, from the beginning, had difficulty developing strategy and tactics for Japan. Japan fit neither the classical European pattern of industrial societies nor that of Asian peasant colonial or semicolonial societies; it was neither France nor China. Nor was it like tsarist Russia, despite a few superficial similarities. Compared to Russia, Japan

in the 1920's was much further along in the process of modernization in some ways, yet more traditional in others. As already noted, both characteristics tended to work against the Japanese communist movement. The situation was not helped, of course, by the exaggerated reports by Japanese communists of labor and peasant unrest or by the misguided optimism of Japanese in Moscow like Katayama.

Quite clearly, the Comintern created serious difficulties for the Japanese communists by its insistence on the two-stage theory of revolution with initial emphasis on the revolution against the imperial system and that system's economic basis—"feudal" landlordism. The Japanese communists were put in an impossible position, given the objective conditions under which they had to operate; no movement advocating revolutionary changes in the imperial system could exist under such conditions. Leaders as far apart ideologically as Yoshino and Yamakawa understood this very well and acted accordingly. Recognition of this fact is why the First Japanese Communist Party never formally adopted the 1922 theses and explains in part the party's dissolution in 1924. It was not until 1927 that the Comintern's strategy and tactics were finally adopted in the slightly amended form of the 1927 theses. The Ronoha hoped to overcome the difficulty by seizing upon the 1927 theses' recognition of bourgeois hegemony. Its members felt that they could avoid the emperor issue, at least on the surface, by calling for a proletarian revolution that would by implication complete the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic stage. Later Kazama, for the same reason, gained much support for the 1931 theses, which took a similar line.

The Comintern also created difficulties for the Japanese Communist Party by its preoccupation after 1928 with the need to mobilize forces against Japanese imperialism, which posed a threat not only to China but also to the Soviet Union. This preoccupation unavoidably placed the Japanese communists increasingly athwart the path of Japanese nationalism, and as nationalism swept the country after the Manchurian Incident in 1931, the communists found themselves more and more isolated. Some of them, like the socialists, were carried along by the tide and formulated justifications for Japan's expansion in Asia. Almost every communist defector complained that the Japanese Communist Party had been an unwitting pawn of the Comintern; they objected to the complete subordination of the party to the Comintern and the Soviet Union. Japan's authorities appealed to the patriotism of the communists in jail in order to get them to defect and return

to society to play a constructive role. It is apparent that after 1932 the Comintern was increasingly disillusioned with the Japanese communists. It continued to provide assistance and advice, but the Soviet leaders were more concerned with securing accurate intelligence reports on Japanese military developments and foreign policy moves. When the popular front appeal came in 1936, it was too late to create an effective mass opposition to militarism.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the Comintern was never able to take the long view with regard to Japan. Instead Comintern policy for Japan was precipitate, making it extremely difficult for the Japanese Communist Party to maintain its identity as a vanguard and, at the same time, cooperate with other left-wing parties and organizations. The tactics of the united front from below, for example, isolated communism from the socialist movement, especially after the decision in 1928 not to help rebuild the Labor-Farmer Party. Comintern strategy and tactics, moreover, made suppression of the party apparatus more likely, if not inevitable.

In addition to the difficulties created by Comintern-formulated strategy and tactics, the common tendency of Japanese communist leaders to be more concerned with theory than practice made it difficult to create a mass movement. The role of the intellectual in prewar Japan was, in general, passive; the intellectual preferred the role of social critic to that of social reformer. There were some exceptions to this rule, but they were few. Yamakawa called attention to this phenomenon early in the course of the communist movement, yet he himself was reluctant to play an activist role and bring the party closer to the masses. His inability to overcome this reluctance may explain, in part, his disavowal of the need for a vanguard party. This tendency was even stronger in Fukumoto Kazuo and his followers who, for a time, dominated the Second Japanese Communist Party.

There are other reasons why the party did not develop a mass base. The preoccupation of the Japanese communists with political matters created difficulties. The Comintern and the Japanese Communist Party tended to exaggerate the political and class consciousness of workers and peasants and therefore overemphasized political aims and class struggle. (It should be pointed out, however, that the socialists did not fare much better politically.) Moreover, party economic policy was often too radical. To call for expropriation of land was hardly realistic; it was simply too sensitive an issue. Finally, occasional lapses by party leaders into adventurism also alienated the masses from the party.

The Japanese Communist Party itself suffered from a number of serious organizational weaknesses. Throughout the prewar period it was rent by factionalism based on personalities and on disagreements over issues of strategy and tactics. In addition, there was no continuing leadership and no accumulation of revolutionary experience, not only because of constant arrests, but also because of defections. Defection from the party was already a problem in the 1920's, but then it was based largely on the appeal of Yamakawa's own brand of Marxism-Leninism and on recognition of a need to avoid a head-on clash with the imperial system. By the end of the decade, however, defections began to be based on acceptance of the principle that socialism could be attained under the imperial system. There was therefore no present or future need for a Japanese Communist Party. Continuing frustration, moreover, was an important factor in defections. Frustration led to defeatism, generally followed by separation from the movement. Although the movement gained new recruits, membership in the Japanese Communist Party never exceeded 1,000 and was usually far below that figure.

As already noted, the Japanese Communist Party was reestablished as a legal political organization under the American Occupation in 1945. With the exception of Nosaka, its leaders were men who had been active in the party in the 1920's and 1930's and who had clung to their ideals and aspirations throughout long, difficult years in prison. They had remained loyal to the Comintern, but some, like Nosaka, had not mourned its passing. In fact, they thought that its dissolution would assist them in their effort to create a national party with greater popular appeal. During the winter of 1945-46, they formulated strategy and tactics of revolution, arriving at a program that was clearly based upon the 1927 and 1932 theses, with emphasis upon two stages of revolution. The immediate tasks were therefore to eliminate the imperial system, democratize Japan, and carry out land reform, while working for the ultimate goal—socialism. This strategy provided a theoretical basis for the Japanese Communist Party to cooperate fully with the Occupation authorities in demilitarizing and democratizing Japan. The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers was simply part of the progressive bourgeoisie, whose historic function was to complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution. That the minimum program of the communists and the objectives of the Occupation were basically identical made cooperation not only expedient, but desirable. Thus, the struggle of the Japanese communists was to be renewed under very favorable conditions.

Appendixes
Biographical Sketches
Chronology

Draft Platform of the Japanese Communist Party,
November 1922

Although the Japanese Communist Party has its origins in the demands common to all communist parties, it should take into consideration the peculiarities in the development of Japanese capitalism. Capitalism in Japan did not suffer the destructive effects of war that it did in other countries; in fact, it had a remarkable growth. At the same time, Japanese capitalism still demonstrates characteristics of former feudal relationships. The greater part of the land is today in the hands of semifeudal big landlords, and the biggest of them all is the emperor, who heads the Japanese government.

A great proportion of the land owned by these big landlords is rented to tenant farmers, who cultivate it with their own implements. Because of intense competition for land, farm rents are rising to the point of what is called "starvation rent." Remnants of feudal relationships are manifested in the structure of the state, which is controlled by a bloc consisting of a definite part of the commercial and industrial capitalists and of the big landlords. The semifeudal character of state power is clearly shown in the important and leading role of the peers and in the basic features of the constitution. Under such conditions the opposition to state power emanates not only from the working class, peasants, and petty bourgeoisie, but also from a great segment of the liberalistic bourgeoisie, who are opposed to the existing government.

With the continuing development of capitalism, the political demands of the liberalistic opposition have increased. These demands emphasize the right of universal suffrage and the need for democratization of state power. In addition, the forceful development of capitalism and the progress of the bourgeois revolution drive the working class and the great mass of peasants into the struggle. Thus, the masses become an active political factor in the life of the country. The severe economic depression in the postwar period caused by the decline of Japanese industry has intensified the class struggle and political crisis throughout Japan. Under such circumstances, the course of social development points toward the revolutionary overthrow of the

The authors' translation of this document is based on a text in *Kominterun Nihon Mondai ni Kansuru Hoshinsho Ketsugi Shu*, pp. 5-11. Another version, based on a German text published in 1924, is included in *Nihon Kyosanto Koryo Shu*, pp. 14-21. Both works are publications of the Japanese Communist Party.

existing political system, against which a variety of social forces and classes are united. Since the completion of the bourgeois revolution in Japan is dependent upon a powerful proletariat and the mass of revolutionary peasants, who seek the abolition of farm rent, it can be a direct prelude to the proletarian revolution, which has as its aims the overthrow of bourgeois control and the realization of proletarian dictatorship.

The Japanese Communist Party, which has as its aim the struggle on behalf of the dictatorship of the proletariat, must make efforts to mobilize all social forces that are capable of carrying on the struggle against the existing government, because its overthrow is an inevitable stage in the struggle of the working class to achieve dictatorship.

Although the Japanese Communist Party is the enemy of bourgeois democracy, it should nevertheless use such transitional slogans as "Overthrow the Imperial Government" and "Abolish the Imperial System," and struggle for the realization of universal suffrage. In the present stage of the Japanese revolutionary movement, the party must mobilize a powerful force, maintain leadership of it, and pave the way for the future struggle of the Japanese proletariat, which has soviet power as its goal. It is particularly important to make use of large groups of peasants, who are moving irresistibly toward violent opposition to the government of big landlords. Various groups among the liberalistic and radical bourgeoisie, on their part, will seek to make allies of the masses of peasants; therefore, the Japanese Communist Party should support all peasants' movements opposing landlords, promote and develop these movements, and disclose the half measures and inconsistencies of liberalistic bourgeois reformists. The party of the working class cannot remain indifferent to a struggle against the imperial government, even though such a struggle may be conducted under democratic slogans. The task of the Communist Party is to constantly intensify the general movement, emphasize all slogans, and win the dominant position in the movement during the struggle against the existing government.

Only after this first direct task has been fulfilled and some of the former allies have begun to move to the side of the defeated class and groups should the Japanese Communist Party strive to advance the revolution, deepen it, and make efforts toward the acquisition of power by soviets of workers and peasants. Thus, the democratic slogans mean nothing more to the Japanese Communist Party than a temporary means of struggle against the imperial government. When the overthrow of the existing political system—the most pressing task of the party—is achieved, the party must abandon these slogans immediately and unconditionally. With these points in mind, the Japanese Communist Party should put forward its most important demands as follows:

Demands in the field of politics.

1. Abolition of the imperial system.
2. Abolition of the House of Peers.
3. Universal suffrage for all men and women over eighteen years of age.
4. Complete freedom of organization for labor unions, labor parties, labor groups, and other labor associations.
5. Complete freedom of publication for workers.
6. Complete freedom of assembly for meetings of workers.
7. The right to demonstrate.
8. The right to strike.
9. Abolition of the armed forces, police, gendarmerie, and secret police.
10. Arming of the workers. [This has been omitted in some versions.]

Demands in the economic field.

1. An eight-hour day for workers.
2. Labor insurance, including unemployment compensation.
3. The establishment of wages based on market prices and a guaranteed minimum wage.
4. The control of production by factory committees.
5. The recognition by employers and the state of labor unions as public institutions of the working class.

Demands in the field of agriculture.

1. The nationalization without compensation of the land of the emperor, big landlords, and temples.
2. The establishment of a national land fund in support of poor peasants, and transfer to peasants of all the land that they have cultivated with their own implements as tenants. The land, however, should not be made their private property.
3. Progressive income tax, with tax liability becoming greater as the level of income rises. By this method the amount of the tax depends upon income.
4. Special luxury tax.

Policies in the field of foreign relations.

1. Abolition of all attempts at intervention.
2. Withdrawal of armed forces from Korea, China, Taiwan, and Sakhalin.
3. Recognition of Soviet Russia.

The working class of Japan will achieve victory in its struggle for the establishment of proletarian dictatorship by way of overthrowing the existing government only when it has a united and centralized leadership group. The opposition to such a directorate by some revolutionary elements (anarchists, syndicalists, etc.) arises from the fact that they cannot understand the whole situation that will develop inevitably at the decisive moment of the struggle. The struggle will sooner or later lead to a direct clash with the power of the state, which has a strong, centralized mechanism. In order to smash this mechanism, the revolutionary proletariat must act on plans based upon a unity of organized strength and of opinion. Thus, the immediate task of the Japanese Communist Party lies in winning over labor unions and maintaining influence over the organizations of the working class. More than anything else, the party must eliminate completely the influence and power of yellow, nationalistic, social reformist leaders in the labor union movement and elevate its own prestige and power among the broad mass of workers organized into unions. The party must also support all actions of the workers against employers and the state, and secure for itself the leading role in all labor movements, however small. The party must make every effort toward a firm tie with the working masses and avoid anything that might isolate it from the workers. As long as anarchists and syndicalists have influence within the labor unions of Japan, the party must form a solid bloc with them and conclude an agreement for the carrying out of a joint struggle. As the party assists the revolutionary elements among the proletariat, it should attempt to eliminate the prejudices that hinder the proper conduct of the struggle.

It is the duty of the party to use every means for gaining influence among the masses of peasants, particularly the poor peasants. As for the movement of the bourgeoisie against the government, the party must make use of it, while ruthlessly criticizing all contradictions in its activity and disclosing all acts of treachery that the liberalistic bourgeoisie will commit out of its fear of the rise of the working class movement.

As a branch of the Communist International, the Japanese Communist Party will fulfill its duties under the flag of the world union of workers in the revolutionary struggle for proletarian dictatorship, and as a fighting unit of the powerful army of the revolutionary proletariat, will march toward the final victory—world dictatorship of the international proletariat.

The Theses of the Shanghai Conference, January 1925

1. The experience of the Japanese communist movement in the past two or three years has made the organizational problem one of the most important problems now before the communist group in Japan. The correct solution of this problem depends on whether leadership in the Japanese labor and revolutionary movements is assumed by the communists or by labor bureaucrats and petty bourgeois, liberal intellectual elements.

2. The organizational problem has come up before this conference because of the progress of the labor movement, the peasant movement, and the movement of the revolutionary intelligentsia in Japan.

In the past year a movement against absolutism arose in Japan, and this movement is now gaining strength. The Japanese Federation of Labor (Sodomei) has changed its policy and has approved a political struggle. Under the conditions now prevailing in Japan, this struggle is first and foremost a struggle against absolutism. The peasant movement has developed and has reached the point of seeking union with the labor movement. This is proved by the fact that the Japan Peasant Union recently passed a resolution at its convention on the need to establish a labor-farmer party, and to this end has set up a political department. Under pressure from the working masses, a similar bureau has been established in Sodomei, while petty bourgeois and intellectual elements have organized Fabian and other groups and seek political leadership of the movement of workers and peasants in Japan.

At this juncture—at a time when the movement against absolutism has increased—imperialism can be destroyed only through the power that can be achieved by uniting the organized workers and peasants. The lack of a centralized organization of Japanese communist elements presents a great danger for the revolutionary movement. That danger might properly be called a crisis for the Japanese communist movement.

3. In view of the improved revolutionary prospects in Japan noted above, the mistakes of those comrades who did not give sufficient attention to

The authors' translation of this document is based upon a 1933 text edited by the Thought Division, Procurator's Office, Tokyo District Court, that appears in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 37-45.

organizing a communist party have become apparent. Instead of interpreting the spontaneous growth of the revolutionary movement as a necessary condition for promoting the organization of a communist party, these comrades are waiting to organize a party with a great number of members, who, in their view, will rally to their cause because of conditions in Japan. They say that in order to organize a communist party in the future there is a need to cultivate the soil; after that, they will proceed to organization. The process of cultivating the soil is the work of the bureau, however; its members must make contact individually and in small groups with communist elements in labor unions, peasant unions, and the intelligentsia, and make those elements members of the future communist party. The bureau should unite those elements into a Japanese Communist Party. The mistakes of certain comrades led to the dissolution of the party.

This conference believes that the following are the major causes of the dissolution of the Japanese Communist Party:

The comrades who took the initiative in the Japanese Communist Party were for the most part separated from practical and organizational movements, lacked the experience and knowledge necessary to lead organizational activities, and were often subject to the influence of anarcho-syndicalism. In launching the communist movement, these leaders and most of their followers treated the theories of communism and proletarian revolution in a very idealistic and abstract manner, and failed to consider the political, economic, and social conditions for the purpose of directing the masses into the class struggle by means of revolutionary tactics. There are fundamental reasons why the activities of the Japanese Communist Party failed to achieve a firm base in the masses, to lead mass movements into communist movements, and to advance the social situation of Japan to the revolutionary stage. In general, the communist movement was little more than a few empty words floating in the air that finally evaporated. The leading comrades did not understand how to overcome fatal party errors, which took various forms.

One reason for the party's collapse lies in the fact that the organizers of the party lacked sufficient understanding of ideology, as well as discipline, resolution, and knowledge regarding the revolutionary movement, especially the underground movement. There was no party discipline to be called upon in the course of struggles. There was opposition to the leadership because of personal relationships, and there were a number of persons who attempted to destroy the leadership of the central committee in the fair name of democratic centralism. Among the worker elements of the party, there were pro-Sodomei and anti-Sodomei factions that opposed each other on policies toward the labor movement.

This abominable situation existed at the time of the formation of the Japanese Communist Party. If the communists had based their actions on

a correct and suitable policy and won a strong and leading position in mass movements, thereby developing in the public at large a tendency toward revolution, while organizing a party with influence because of its collective power and unity of thought, they would not have experienced such a failure. Unfortunately, however, a big mistake was made when the party was formed, and afterwards the fault was not remedied by the adoption of the correct policy of organization. The Japanese communists were united on the basis of personal relationships among their leaders. Accordingly, there was among them a strong tendency to follow individual leaders, and even after the party was formed, the various small groups to which they had belonged were carried over into the party. The party was therefore prevented from becoming a united organization. In addition, there were adventurists in the party, and the moral damage the party suffered from them was greater than other, material damage. The young Communist Party of Japan was quick to adopt the form of more advanced parties in Europe; however, it failed to carry out the objectives of organization in accordance with our organizational practice.

4. The organizational problem cannot be correctly solved unless this conference takes a clear and decisive attitude toward the causes of the Japanese Communist Party's dissolution.

This conference must therefore emphasize the following points: The opinion of some comrades that objective conditions were a greater cause of the dissolution of the Japanese Communist Party than the faults of its leaders and the mistakes in the party activities is clearly wrong and dangerous in that it could lead directly to opportunism. This view gives rise to a tendency among the Japanese comrades not to organize the party but simply to prepare communist elements ideologically for a future party.

The error of opportunism of these comrades is obvious in the light of the way the Japanese party responded to the Comintern's direction. During the last two months, the Comintern more than once called on the Japanese comrades to pay attention and explained that they should demand the democratization of Japan and expose the foundations of autocracy and of the remaining feudal forces, and that in the present situation, they should draw the masses of workers and peasants into the party and advance slogans of struggle under which they can overcome objective conditions.

This conference states therefore that the Japanese Communist Party did not adhere to Comintern direction during the past two years and that the principal factor that created the crisis of the Japanese Communist Party leading to dissolution was the mistaken policy of the party's leading comrades. This is apparent in the fact that the Japanese comrades did not carry out through propaganda and agitation what the Comintern directed. They failed (a) to propagandize generally for the democratization of Japan

and specifically for universal suffrage elections (while exposing to the masses the true character of bourgeois democracy), (b) to propagandize and agitate for the protection of the economic interests of workers and peasants on the basis of their immediate demands, (c) to begin agitation for the establishment of a worker-peasant party in conformity with the Comintern's direction, (d) to launch a campaign, on the one hand, to defend the economic and political interests of the poor and the peasants in the districts stricken by the great earthquake, and, on the other, to expose the class nature of the bureaucratic government, in conformity with the Comintern's direction, and (e) to establish a legal party organ for the masses at the proper time, and to set up the machinery for the printing and distributing of illegal documents. In short, they failed to establish organs to outline the Communist Party's tactics to the working masses and openly incite them against the autocratic government, and to expose the true nature of bourgeois democracy, thereby preparing the masses for the struggles that will follow the overthrow of autocracy.

As the result of this "negative" attitude toward the organizational problem, communist cells were not organized among the workers in the course of a propaganda campaign among the masses, but were organized routinely by personal followers of young comrades. While the Japanese party was in existence, the leading comrades did not make sufficient effort to correct this fatal fault. The central organ of the Japanese party was therefore composed of individual comrades and their followers rather than groups representing the masses in the party.

With regard to the question of establishing a legal worker-peasant party, the Japanese leaders did not emphasize uniting the masses under one slogan, organizing the masses into a federation of workers and peasants, and setting forth the demands of the masses in the platform of the Communist Party. Instead, they emphasized working out an organizational plan for a worker-peasant party in cooperation with various representatives of the labor bureaucrats and politicians among the liberalistic intellectual elements.

5. While pointing out the faults of the leading Japanese comrades, this conference does not overlook the great difficulties that have faced the Japanese communist movement in the past two years.

During this period every branch of the Japanese armed forces and gendarmerie interfered in the labor and revolutionary movements in order to root out communist elements and keep workers and peasants away from revolutionary influences. This conference recognizes the great difficulties confronting the communists in labor organizations—difficulties resulting from the policies of the syndicalist leaders of labor unions and difficulties stemming from the fact that, as a result of terrorism and anticommunist

measures, there are a limited number of communists, which makes it easier for syndicalists and anarchists to attack communism. However, the following must be said with reference to this matter: the fact that our leading comrades believed that the syndicalists and reformists increased their offensive against us because of our sectarianism and did not attribute it to an increase in government oppression means that they do not understand our relationship with the working masses.

As a result of government oppression, our illegal organizations were disclosed, and this gave the syndicalists and others an opportunity to expose the so-called Communist Party schemes in labor unions. Yet our leaders not only failed to use illegal documents to expose the true nature of the syndicalists and reformists to the masses and explain the meaning of communist tactics, but even took syndicalist and reformist attacks for an indication of the antagonism of the working masses to us and found therein an excuse for the dissolution of the party.

Our leading comrades therefore mistook their own negativism and their surrender to the government's attacks, as well as those of syndicalists and reformists in labor unions, for negativism on the part of party members and passivity on the part of the working masses toward the Communist Party. They regarded this passive attitude as the "inevitable outcome" of the existence of a communist party. However, this conference believes that the passive attitude of working masses toward us, or, more correctly, the cause of our isolation from the masses, is the result of the party being generally negative in its activities. This was caused by the mistakes of the party leaders and their negative policies toward all important problems of the labor movement and political life.

6. The theories held by some comrades, who hope in the future to form a communist party based upon the spontaneous growth of the revolutionary movement in Japan, can be attributed to the traditional policy of passivity among our leading comrades.

To rely on spontaneous growth leads inevitably to an opportunistic policy: it means adjusting to externals and following the lead of the revolutionary movement, instead of making strenuous efforts to bring under one's power the natural course of growth of the revolutionary movement in order to make the movement one of conscious strife imbued with the communist spirit. In interpreting the rise of the revolutionary movement as the result of an intensification of the class struggle and as providing favorable conditions for communist activities, our comrades are led to over-optimism or to considering the process in the abstract. The danger stemming from the attitude our leading comrades take toward the problem of making use of the growth of the revolutionary movement for the organization of a communist party will certainly prove fatal.

These comrades think that since an illegal party is not needed at the present time and since it is impossible to have a legal [communist] party under the present circumstances in Japan, they should not have a communist party. They do not see any danger in this approach. They maintain that since we are now fighting solely against autocracy for the democratization of Japan and so can advance by cooperating with legal organizations of the workers and radical intelligentsia, we need talk about forming our own communist party only after autocracy is overthrown, when there will have to be a struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat and when fellow travelers will have left our side; that is the time to form a communist party. These comrades continue to insist that after democratic freedom has been put into practice, it will be possible to form a mass communist party.

In this matter these comrades have committed two errors that lead directly to opportunism. They do not understand the nature of the struggle against autocracy in Japan today. They do not understand that the proletariat, uniting with peasants and rural workers, is the decisive factor in this struggle. What appears to be a revolutionary spirit of the petty bourgeois intelligentsia and urban bourgeoisie is nothing more than a sign that the final struggle against Japanese autocracy is drawing near. As the history of various foreign countries shows, the bourgeoisie tries in such a period to use the masses of workers and peasants for its purposes. When the time of struggle comes, the same bourgeoisie hesitates, and, at the moment of the decisive clash, betrays the working masses and peasants, and compromises with the very autocracy it has led the working masses to fight.

In a country like Japan, where capitalism has reached the stage of monopoly economically and the stage of imperialism politically, there is little possibility that the medium and petty bourgeoisie can develop. Therefore, the time when the bourgeoisie betrays the workers and peasants will come earlier than in the capitalist countries of the West. Accordingly, the struggle against autocracy in Japan and the results of the struggle will be determined by the question of who will prepare and organize the working masses for the struggle and who will lead them to the final fight against autocracy.

In the period after autocracy is overthrown, relations between social forces are not determined by democratic freedom, as a matter of form; on the contrary, they are determined by considerations of by whom and how the masses of workers and peasants are organized and by the extent to which the consciousness of class struggle or class antagonism is cultivated among them.

The present central bureau of the Japanese communists, understanding the basic mistakes of these comrades, deems it absolutely necessary to undertake every possible activity to promote the spontaneous growth of the revolutionary movement and the organization of a communist party, to influ-

ence the workers' and peasants' movements through the party's communist tactics, and, while developing an indomitable class spirit among the masses, to convert the spontaneous revolutionary movement in Japan into a conscious struggle against autocracy.

From what has been mentioned above, it follows that the central bureau must immediately launch a program of propaganda and agitation among the masses of workers and peasants to advance the principle of class struggle in the spirit of communism, and, by explaining the meaning of our maximum platform to the masses, lay bare the true nature of bourgeois democracy. At the same time, we recognize that it is essential that the Japanese communists form cells and groups of communists and organize them into one communist party at the earliest possible date.

It would be out of the question to prepare and organize the masses of workers and peasants for the struggle against autocracy without immediately and directly organizing the existing groups of communists into a party. Our leading comrades have underestimated the role and significance of a communist party in directing the struggles of the masses at the present time, and they have underestimated the great danger arising from the fact that leadership coming from workers, bureaucrats, and petty bourgeois politicians will begin consciously to take control of the spontaneous process of growth of the revolutionary movement.

A second fault of these comrades is their ignorance of how to combine legal and illegal methods of the communists in Japan under such circumstances. Because of fears caused by factionalism, they disregard the need for underground propaganda and agitation with the excuse that such activities are not feasible under present conditions in Japan. Yet they have not been able to eliminate completely the group of radical intelligentsia and opportunists among the so-called labor leaders by legal agitation.

In pointing out this fact, we consider it a serious mistake, combined with the general error in the organizational problem, that the leading comrades in Japan failed to found an illegal press, along with a legal one, and failed to make efforts to educate the masses by this means. Therefore, we recognize that an important task for the Japanese communists at the present time is to set up machinery for the printing and distribution of underground documents. We believe that the nature of the legal press of the Japanese communists should conform to the principles and spirit of our underground agitation. When we talk in legal form, we must follow as closely as possible the line of our illegal press.

We are aware that some leading comrades, attracted by the legal possibilities for our work, have flatly refused to engage in illegal activities. The ruling cliques in the Japanese bureaucracy recognize that the spread of communist propaganda and organization among the masses is a menace to them and that, in Japan, as elsewhere, opportunists in the labor and revo-

lutionary movements constitute the left wing of the bourgeoisie rather than the right wing of the workers' revolutionary movement. They therefore allow the "legal socialists" to publish a "radical" press and encourage them to do so.

In view of the growing danger that communist propaganda and agitation will be replaced by opportunist agitation, we recognize that we must not only refuse to agree with the "liberal thought" in the legal press, but try to eliminate such thought and openly spread communist propaganda through underground documents.

7. The effects of the above-mentioned mistakes of some leading comrades in the Japanese communist movement can be seen in the form of organization of the communist bureau, which represents the sole, unified, concentrated group in the movement. As seen in its tasks, the bureau appears to have set forth the objectives a party should pursue under the present circumstances in Japan, but, in fact, it simply is not advancing toward those objectives by means of organizing a vanguard party of the Japanese working class.

As for propaganda for the masses and the education of proletarian elements, the bureau regards these as something to be done from outside. That is, the bureau uses only the method of theoretical propaganda for the masses and not the method of propaganda linked to the struggle against autocracy and opportunism in the labor movement. Our comrades in the bureau only issue journals of abstract theories and, as individuals, work on various legal Marxist journals published by radical intellectuals. They do not have their own press, which concentrates on disseminating propaganda dealing with the day-to-day problems in the political life of Japan to the militant communist masses and the community at large.

As for the education of advanced elements of the working class, our comrades in the bureau think in terms of a method of educating them theoretically, not in terms of educating them through day-to-day struggles by communists in order to achieve the workers' and peasants' political and economic demands based on the minimum program set forth in the Draft Platform of the Japanese Communist Party prepared by the Comintern two years ago.

As mentioned above, these errors have stemmed from our comrades' general views regarding the possibility and means of organizing a communist party in Japan today.

Paragraph 2 of "The Bureau's Tasks"—"Organization of a Party in the Broad Sense"—clearly shows the bureau's thinking concerning organization. "Organization of a party in the broad sense" means that, instead of the bureau including among its own activities the mobilization of communist elements into a party, individuals affiliated with the bureau rally those elements around themselves. In this way, the bureau is in fact continuing

an organizational policy it regards as having caused the dissolution of the party.

We are firmly convinced that this organizational policy of the bureau conflicts with the guiding principles for the formation of a communist party and is therefore in error. We declare that a communist party should be organized and developed as a group of men holding similar views who will act on the basis of a unified program and tactics and be subject to common rules. A communist party cannot be organized on the basis of the current plan of the Japanese bureau—the method of bringing individual communist elements together and then integrating them into a group.

The basic organizational goals of the bureau should be:

First, to eliminate the traditional abuse of grouping around individuals.

Second, to discontinue the arbitrary method by which elements are organized indiscriminately and forced to work, which has been the greatest defect of all; and to organize into cells those who take an active part in the proletarian movement, thereby conducting training and education in communism and improving the quality of members of the communist party in the future.

Third, to unite the elements that are won over, work to expand their organizations, and lead them to form the party; and, in order to carry out this task, to maintain contact between militant groups and encourage a joint movement.

Fourth, to discipline the cells under controls administered by the organizational department of the bureau, and to combine them on a local basis to form a parent body for a communist party.

8. To act as the central organ of the communist movement in Japan, the bureau must first renounce all the errors mentioned above and express its desire to work under the organizational and propaganda principles set forth above. Second, it must bring communist workers now in labor unions into the bureau.

Third, it must agree to bring together immediately those former party members who did not forsake their views during the period of persecution last year, and organize them under its command in accordance with their fields of activity. In addition, the bureau must persuade all those who are carrying on communist activities in labor unions, tenant farmer unions, and the revolutionary intelligentsia that we need a suitable organization; these elements must be formed into cells based on the principle of division by industry, and these cells must be a step toward a single organization that can be placed directly under the bureau. Fourth, sections of the bureau must be established as follows:

- (1) An agitation and propaganda section to issue legal and illegal organ newspapers.
- (2) An organizational section to rally and organize communist elements,

establishing cells in factories, workshops, tenant farmer unions, and among revolutionary students and the intelligentsia; create a unit to print and distribute documents; and maintain contact with local organizations.

- (3) An information section to study problems and collect the materials needed for our legal and illegal agitation and propaganda; work in Marxist groups, labor schools, workers' clubs, and legal political associations such as the Society for the Study of Politics; and take part in the work of the agitation and propaganda section.

The bureau as a whole must oversee the work concerning workers and peasants in the broad sense and determine the work of the agitation and propaganda section and the organizational section. This conference hopes that the bureau, uniting with workers and communists, will carry out its very responsible and glorious task as the organizer of communist elements in Japan.

This conference considers it necessary to publish this resolution in an illegal party newspaper for the purposes of informing the Japanese communists of the facts about party dissolution and announcing the firm intention of the leaders of the communist movement to begin organizing a communist party on the basis of the proposals in this resolution. To inform communist elements of this resolution will further the objective of the common task of founding a communist party. The same can be said of informing them of the cause of party dissolution and of the bureau's activities. This will help to sweep away all the rumors and slanders being spread by the enemies of the communist movement.

An Additional Remark

The conference deems it necessary to resolve that a convention to establish the Japanese Communist Party be called by the new bureau in July 1925. Delegates to such a convention must be summoned from among all communist organizations and cells, as well as from among communists and individuals working in factories, labor unions, tenant farmer unions, and student federations.

The Moscow Theses of March 1926

The Resolution on the Question of Japan Decided by the Standing Committee of the Comintern

1. Japanese capitalism developed rapidly during the European war, and the political power of the landlord-capitalist bloc, in which the landlords previously held hegemony, is now completely under the hegemony of the bourgeoisie.
2. The losses that the bourgeoisie and the landlords suffered from the great financial crisis of 1920 after the European war and from the great earthquake of 1923 have been recovered through intense exploitation of the workers and peasants and through dispossession of the semifeudal business organizations of traditional domestic industries and small traders.
3. Consequently, the living conditions of workers have declined markedly; peasants have become increasingly impoverished; the petty bourgeois stratum has become considerably more proletarian; and unemployment has continued. The movement of workers and peasants is rapidly turning to the left.
4. In order to suppress the opposition of the workers and peasants, the Japanese bourgeoisie and landlords are mobilizing their semifeudal political machinery and, at the same time, are bribing Christian right-wing leaders like Suzuki Bunji and Kagawa Toyohiko in order to make them their agents in the workers' and peasants' movements.
5. We, the Japanese communist group, should therefore abandon our group form immediately and concentrate on founding a party based on Comintern policies.
6. A labor-farmer party movement representing an alliance of workers and peasants is necessary in order to unite all forces opposed to the bloc of the bourgeoisie and landlords. Although the policy of creating a united party, in defiance of the right-wing policy of disunion, is correct, the Communist Party should not lose its independence, but should form strong fractions

within the Labor-Farmer Party to gain hegemony over it and place it under communist influence.

7. The Japanese communists must participate wholeheartedly in the workers' day-to-day struggles and devote their energies to strengthening and expanding left-wing labor unions as well as the labor union unification movement.

8. Since the bourgeois revolution has to be carried out by the proletariat and the peasantry, there are prospects that it will be rapidly transformed into a proletarian revolution. The Communist Party should therefore work most actively and devotedly at the forefront of all progressive and democratic demands of the workers and peasants.

*The Thesis on the Group's Activities Decided by the
Far East Subcommittee of the Comintern*

1. The Japanese communist group has not been courageous in party activities. It has been marked by petty bourgeois indecision. The remnants of the views of such old socialists as Yamakawa and Sakai (known as dissolutionism and legalism) must be completely removed.

2. The principle of 100 per cent communism, which has been most strongly advocated by Arahata, must be rejected immediately; those workers who know about the Communist Party and wish to join should be admitted as party members.

3. Group activities—propaganda, agitation, and campaigns—have not been properly organized, either because the group is still young or because the policies of its leaders are fundamentally wrong. Bolshevization of the whole organization must be effected quickly.

4. The group must be expanded and, at the same time, factory cells must be established according to the Comintern's organizational policy, so that the party may be based on them.

5. The group must vigorously launch secret publications, which are necessary for its expansion and for independent activities. It must eliminate the unfortunate tendency to make these publications academic, and must relate them to immediate, concrete problems.

6. The group must immediately start forming party fractions in labor unions, peasant unions, labor-farmer parties, youth organizations, and student groups, and embark on genuine party activities.

7. Before the next Comintern plenum, the group should increase its membership, hold an inaugural convention for a party, and report on its progress.

Theses on Japan Adopted in the Session of the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern on July 15, 1927

I. Japanese Imperialism and War

The great increase in the relative strength of the Far East in world economics and politics after the war makes the problem of Japanese imperialism particularly important. The strengthening of Japanese imperialism during the last ten years, its growing aggressiveness, its penetration of China, India, the Near East, the Pacific islands, U.S.S.R. territory, etc., have transformed Japan into a first-class imperialist power of the vast Asiatic continent.

One of the main confrontations inherent in world capitalism is going to take place in the Pacific. At the same time, one of the most powerful revolutionary movements of this age is developing in China, which will be of extraordinary significance for the progress of the world revolution. The destiny of Japanese capitalism is becoming increasingly identified with the destiny of world capitalism. The Japanese imperialists are playing a particularly active role in preparing the coming war. It can be said that they are already conducting this war, since Japanese intervention in China is an accomplished fact.

A neutral position on the part of Japanese capitalism with regard to the Chinese revolution is out of the question, since its most vital and essential interests are tied to China. China is the main source of raw material for Japan, with her limited coal and iron deposits; China is the principal market for Japanese industry, and 35 per cent of Japanese exports are carried to Chinese ports. China is also the principal field for the investment of Japanese capital. The Japanese bourgeoisie has invested about 2,500,000,000 yen in Chinese factories, mills, mines, and railways, particularly in Manchuria. Naturally, Japanese imperialism sees a direct menace to its own interests in the development of the Chinese revolution and will stop at nothing, will make any expenditures or alliances, in order to choke off the labor and agrarian movements.

The 1927 (July) theses appeared in *International Press Correspondence*, January 12, 1928, pp. 50-54. The authors have edited the text of this document slightly, after consulting several Japanese versions. A convenient source for the Japanese text is Ishido and Yamabe, *Kominterun Nihon ni Kansuru Teze Shu*, pp. 28-45.

Japanese imperialism—the most dangerous foe of the Chinese revolution—managed, by playing an extremely crafty diplomatic game, to get possession of the most important strategic positions in China. Japanese imperialism is adopting an increasingly open and active counterrevolutionary policy in China, particularly since the Chinese bourgeoisie headed by Chiang Kai-shek went over to the camp of the counterrevolution.

The hostility of Japanese imperialism to the Chinese revolution is being intensified because the development of that revolution constitutes a direct menace to Japanese colonial domination: it may affect her most important colonies, particularly Korea. The struggle against the Chinese revolution drives, and to a considerable extent has already driven, the Japanese imperialists to form a bloc with the British and American imperialists for joint action against the Chinese workers and peasants at the present time and for joint preparations for war against the U.S.S.R. in the more or less immediate future.

A union of Japanese imperialism with America and Britain for a struggle against the Chinese revolution and the U.S.S.R. will not eliminate the profound and ever-sharpening contradictions between Japan and the other imperialist powers. The interests of Japanese and British imperialism are already in sharp conflict in China. The erection of a British naval base in Singapore is regarded by the Japanese press as a hostile act openly and directly aimed at Japan.

The antagonisms between Japan and the United States are still sharper. American immigration policy has affected Japan more than any other country. At the same time, United States expansion in the Pacific is conflicting with Japanese expansion and bringing a clash between the two powers ever closer and more inevitable. While jointly combating the Chinese revolution and preparing a war against the U.S.S.R., the United States, Britain, and Japan are at the same time preparing for war among themselves—preparing for a bloody struggle for an imperialist partition of the Pacific basin.

II. The Internal Situation

The development of Japanese imperialism, which began rather late as compared with Europe—only in the 'sixties of the nineteenth century—proceeded with unusual rapidity. The rate of development of Japanese capitalism was not retarded by the war and the period after; on the contrary, Japanese capitalism made enormous progress during that period. In contrast to capitalism in Britain and Europe, Japanese capitalism is undoubtedly now on the rising curve of development, although its resources and potential are considerably more limited than those of the United States. The mercantile tonnage of Japan was 2.5 times greater in 1926 than in 1912; her railway network was 87 per cent greater than in 1912; her textile

production was 273 per cent greater than in 1912; and her production of electric power increased more than six times.

The extraordinarily rapid growth of industry was accompanied by a rapid development of capitalist relationships—with an increase in the political importance and relative strength of the Japanese bourgeoisie that was the outcome of a series of internal conflicts and compromises between the nobility and the bourgeoisie in the transformation of the government. The present Japanese government is in the hands of a bloc of the capitalists and the landlords. The capitalist and landlord bloc is in general a characteristic feature of the Japanese imperialist epoch, but it possesses certain peculiarities resulting from the peculiar conditions of development during the last 60 years.

The revolution of 1868 opened the path for capitalist development in Japan. Political power, however, remained in the hands of the feudal elements—in the hands of the large landowners and the military and royal cliques. The feudal traits of the Japanese state were not mere traditional relics, rudimentary survivals of the past, but a very convenient instrument for primitive capitalist accumulation, skillfully utilized by Japanese capitalism during its further development.

The transformation of the old Japanese state into a bourgeois state proceeded along two paths; on the one hand, the relative strength and the political significance of the industrial, commercial, and financial bourgeoisie were continually increasing, while, on the other, the process of blending the feudal strata with the new bourgeoisie was proceeding rapidly, stimulated by economic causes, by the fear of the labor and peasant movements, and by the requirements of imperialist policy.

The Japanese state is in itself a powerful element of Japanese capitalism. No European country has come as close to adopting state capitalism as Japan, where according to some estimates 30 per cent of all capital invested in industry and finance, not including the railroads, which are almost entirely in the hands of the government, belongs to the state. The Mikado is not only a big landowner, but also a very rich stockholder in many stock companies and combines; he also has his own bank, with assets of 100 million yen.

The process of capitalist concentration and the merging of industrial with bank capital into finance capital—a process that results in increasing numbers of trusts and combines—has also gone very far in Japan. Thus, not only is the Japanese state the greatest capitalist enterprise, but of the two ruling parties of the Japanese bourgeoisie—the Seiyukai and Kenseikai—one is maintained by and ministers to the interests of the Mitsui concern, and the other is maintained by and ministers to the interests of the Mitsubishi firm. Hence, there is a twofold process of lending to the old feudal forms a bourgeois content and of transforming the bourgeoisie into a

counterrevolutionary force that, although it has a good many differences with the feudal elements, is nevertheless acting jointly with them against the labor and agrarian movements.

The struggle for the democratization of the Japanese state, the abolition of the monarchy, and the removal of the present ruling cliques from the government in a country with such a high level of capital concentration will therefore inevitably change from a struggle against feudal survivals into a struggle against capitalism itself. The bourgeois-democratic revolution of Japan will rapidly grow into a socialist revolution precisely because the contemporary Japanese state, with all its feudal attributes and relics, is the most concentrated expression of Japanese capitalism, embodying a whole series of its most vital nerves; to strike at the state is to strike at the capitalist system of Japan as a whole.

The prospect of a rapid transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution does not, of course, eliminate the problem of the bourgeois-democratic revolution itself. No matter how far the merging of the bourgeoisie and the landlords has proceeded, large-scale land-ownership still continues to be a very significant and highly independent factor in the political and economic life of the country.

Regardless of the stormy development of capitalism in the towns, the villages are still characterized by extreme backwardness, both from a technological and a socioeconomic point of view. Lack of land and great poverty prevail among the peasants. There are 5.5 million peasant families; 80 per cent of the peasants cultivate patches of 1.1 *cho* (about three acres), 0.1 per cent of the peasants possess 8 per cent of the cultivated land. The system of usurious rent is widespread in Japan. Almost half of the crops gathered from 40 per cent of the entire cultivated areas are paid as rent by tenant farmers to the landowners. These few figures illustrate the acute agrarian problem in Japan. They show that the agrarian revolution has already ripened and that the problem of the bourgeois-democratic revolution is a very real one.

There are thus in Japan both the objective prerequisites for a bourgeois-democratic revolution (the feudal remnants in the state structure, an acute agrarian problem) and the objective prerequisites for the rapid transformation of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution (the high level of concentration of capital, the growing number of trusts, the close relationship between the state and the trusts, the approximation of the economy to state capitalism, and the unity of the bourgeoisie with the landed nobility).

But if Japanese economics point directly to revolution, the ideological backwardness of Japan—or what Lenin called “the subjective revolutionary situation” as opposed to the “objective revolutionary situation”—is a great impediment and stumbling block. Neither the proletariat nor the

peasants of Japan have any revolutionary traditions or any experience of struggle. The broad masses are only now awakening to political consciousness, and only an insignificant section at that. The labor and peasant organizations are few and scattered, and so far not very active. Class consciousness and a grasp of the necessity of class struggle are still stifled by nationalist poison or pacifist illusions among the broad masses. The political consciousness of the proletariat—let alone the peasantry—its class consciousness, its revolutionary organization, are only beginning to emerge from the embryonic stage. It is precisely in this area that the Japanese communists must devote their most serious attention and greatest energy.

At present, the two main bourgeois parties—the Seiyukai and Kenseikai—alternate with each other in the government. Both of them are not only closely connected with big capital but represent the direct and open political agents of the two most powerful capitalist concerns of the country—the Mitsui and Mitsubishi. However, the Seiyukai has closer ties to the nobility and the military and royal cliques, whose role in the government is very great, whereas the Kenseikai acts as the representative of the quasi-liberal bourgeoisie, which aims at the consolidation and support of the government mechanism of capitalist exploitation with the help of more “liberal” methods. Thus, in 1925 the Kenseikai extended the franchise. In comparison to the Seiyukai, the Kenseikai occupies a more moderate position in relation to the U.S.S.R. There is no doubt, however, that, as the struggle against the revolutionary movement in the Japanese colonies and in Japan itself proves, there is no essential difference between the two parties.

Japanese imperialism is on a rising curve of development. However, the contradictions of its position and the growing difficulties of further development are beginning to assume a threatening character, which takes the form of an acute capitalist crisis. There is no doubt that the Japanese bourgeoisie has recovered from the postwar crisis and to a considerable extent from the effects of the earthquake of 1923. However, the development of the revolution in China places the main sources of raw material for Japanese industry and the huge profits accruing from capital invested in China in a precarious position. It also threatens the colonial possessions of Japan in Korea, Formosa, Manchuria, etc. The struggle against Britain and the United States—the imperialist great power policy—imposes upon the shoulders of the broad masses of the people enormous and unbearable burdens of militarism and navalism that undoubtedly hamper the development of productive forces.

The poverty of the peasants and the working class, whose wages in 1926 were considerably reduced, thus injuring the domestic market, makes the question of the foreign market very acute. Japanese bourgeois economists are concerned about overcapitalization, about expansion of the industrial

apparatus that is not in keeping with the potential domestic consumption. Furthermore, the problem of overpopulation, aggravated by the American immigration laws, further undermines the social system of Japanese capitalism. All these factors, which represent elements of the "objective revolutionary situation," revolutionize the broad masses of workers and peasants and help to create and develop a "subjective revolutionary situation."

The proletarianization of the petty bourgeoisie is rapidly developing in Japan. Despite the high level of capitalist development, semicolonial working hours and semicolonial low wages still prevail. So-called labor legislation is directed entirely against the workers. Strikes and trade unions are still illegal. A woman has no political or social rights. The Communist Party has been driven underground, and mere membership in the party is punishable by ten years' imprisonment. All these factors cannot help but radicalize the masses. These factors have fertilized and continue to fertilize the ground for communist propaganda and organization.

III. The Driving Forces in the Japanese Revolution

As was pointed out above, Japan is governed by a bloc of the bourgeoisie and landlords—a bloc under the hegemony of the bourgeoisie. This being so, illusions that the bourgeoisie can in any way be utilized as a revolutionary factor, even during the first stages of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, must be abandoned. Analogies with China cannot be drawn. China was and is an object of imperialist policy, whereas Japan, under the bourgeoisie, is itself a first-class imperialist power. In China the "nationalist" bourgeoisie was fighting for power at the beginning of the revolution, whereas the Japanese bourgeoisie already holds power and is making extensive use of the government machinery with all its feudal attributes and relics for the organization and protection of capitalist exploitation. Finally, it is important to note that the level of capitalist development in Japan is so high that the bourgeois-democratic revolution will immediately develop into a socialist revolution, a revolution against capitalism itself.

The driving forces in the Japanese revolution are the proletariat, the peasantry, and the urban petty bourgeoisie. First and foremost are the proletariat and the peasantry, however. The Japanese proletariat must link its struggle for a socialist revolution with a struggle of all toilers of Japan, under the hegemony of the proletariat, for a bourgeois-democratic revolution. There are in Japan all the necessary prerequisites for a revolutionary alliance of the workers and peasants to counterbalance the reactionary landowner and capitalist alliance. A correct political line on the part of the working class in relation to the peasantry is one of the most vital prerequisites for a successful development of the revolution in Japan.

The peasantry can be victorious in its struggle for land, in its struggle against feudal survivals and the oppression of contemporary concentrated capitalism, only under the leadership of the working class. The history of any country shows that the peasant movement is always doomed to failure unless it is led by the proletariat. In a country like Japan, where more than half of the population is agrarian, the isolation of the proletariat from the peasantry would be exceedingly dangerous, and would give the bourgeoisie a most effective weapon. An alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry is absolutely essential in the interests of both classes, but this alliance will be revolutionary and victorious only if the working class has hegemony. For the working class, the bourgeois-democratic revolution is merely a step on the road to a socialist revolution. In leading the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the proletariat does not lose its class consciousness; on the contrary, it is precisely the prospect of transforming the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution that is the decisive factor for the proletariat at all stages of the struggle.

The proletariat is the only consistent revolutionary class—a revolutionary class through every stage. The hegemony of the proletariat in the workers' and peasants' alliance is necessary in order to overcome the half-heartedness, indecision, and possible vacillation of the peasantry. The peasantry belongs to the petty bourgeoisie, and the power of the petty bourgeoisie is a "power of vacillation." The working class and its communist party must always bear this in mind. The bourgeoisie has always tried and undoubtedly will try in Japan to utilize this "power of vacillation." Such vacillation can at certain stages of development become extremely dangerous for the revolution, especially at the stage of its transformation into a socialist revolution, when the bourgeoisie will vigorously play on the middle-class instincts and prejudices inherent in the peasantry. Only the hegemony of a disciplined, class-conscious, and consistent revolutionary proletariat under the leadership of the Communist Party can neutralize and overcome these vacillations, which might otherwise be disastrous.

An alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry means, of course, an alliance first of all with the rural poor. Supported by the poor peasantry and through them, the proletariat establishes connections with and leads the main mass of the peasantry.

All objective prerequisites for a revolutionary alliance with the working class and the peasantry are undoubtedly present in Japan. However, organization is required. The Japanese peasantry suffers the greatest poverty and is oppressed by high taxes and rents. The revolutionary movement is growing rapidly among the rural proletarians and semiproletarians. Already about 12 per cent of the peasantry are organized in peasant leagues. The communists must exert all their energy to bring these leagues into the Labor-Farmer Party, under revolutionary communist leadership. The re-

actionary alliance of the landlords and capitalists must be counterbalanced by a revolutionary alliance of the workers and peasants.

IV. The Communist Party and Its Role

The working class can secure victory only under the leadership of its most advanced, revolutionary, conscious, and organized section—the Communist Party. The experience of Germany, particularly Bavaria, and of Hungary and Italy shows the absolute correctness of Lenin's theory that no victorious proletarian revolution is possible without a firmly consolidated, ideologically consistent mass communist party.

Nowhere in the world is the working class a completely homogeneous mass. This is the case in Japan. There are strata within the class with different standards of living and different levels of political and cultural development. Each of these strata can and does have its own interests that for the most politically backward and least class-conscious workers may obscure, and often do obscure, the general class interests of the proletariat. It is possible to overcome craft differences only through a prolonged mass struggle. Even in a country like England, craft division of the proletariat has not been eliminated, either ideologically or organizationally. The bourgeoisie, with the help of its social democratic and trade union agents, actively encourages and fosters craft differences.

Closely linked to this craft division, and partly resulting from it, is another danger—"economism." For the most politically backward section of the working class, the daily struggle and concrete demands that are advanced during economic conflicts obscure the struggle against capitalism—the struggle for the complete and final emancipation from capitalist exploitation, which is possible only through revolution, through the acquisition of state power by the proletariat, through the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. "Economism" is an infantile sickness of the labor movement; at the same time, it is the soil in which the worst sort of opportunism grows—an ideology adapting the proletariat to the capitalist mode of production instead of rousing it to a revolutionary struggle against it.

The Communist Party is the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat fighting for the fundamental historical interests of the working class as a whole. Without a communist party proletarian class distinctions and "economism" cannot be eliminated. Without a communist party there can be no struggle for a proletarian dictatorship. It is just as necessary to have a party as it is necessary to keep in mind the principal task of the proletariat—the establishment of the dictatorship—in the partial demands put forward in the daily struggle; it is just as necessary to have a party as it is necessary to preserve the main revolutionary thrust at every stage of the struggle and to give it precedence over everything else; it is just as necessary

to have a party as it is necessary that the communist party actively participate in the day-to-day struggle and lead it, actively working in the mass organizations and leading them but at the same time preserving its ideological and organizational independence—preserving its own identity, the identity of the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. Any other orientation signifies a descent to opportunism and, in the final analysis, results in the abandonment of the political struggle against capitalism—the struggle for the abolition of capitalism.

One of the principal errors of the Japanese communist leadership consisted in the underestimation and misunderstanding of the role of the Communist Party, and in the underestimation of its specific importance in the labor movement. The idea that a communist party can in any respect be supplanted by left trade union fractions or a broad workers' and peasants' party is fundamentally wrong. Without an independent, ideologically sound, disciplined, and centralized mass communist party there can be no victorious revolutionary movement. The struggle against every tendency toward liquidation, particularly those that found their expression in Comrade Hoshi's [Yamakawa's] policy, is therefore the first task of the Japanese communists. Just as it is necessary in the interests of all that the most advanced revolutionary section, the working class, lead the struggle of all toilers, it is necessary that the Japanese Communist Party, the revolutionary vanguard of the working class, lead the struggle of the working class.

Therefore, the main task now in Japan is to attain a quantitative and qualitative improvement of the Communist Party. The party, while working intensively to raise its ideological and political level, must recruit more members, welcome to its ranks and organize all the progressive and revolutionary elements of the Japanese proletariat, and step by step consolidate and win leading positions in the Japanese labor movement.

V. The Communist Party and Social Democracy

Under present conditions, a communist party can develop only through a struggle against social democracy. This is absolutely the case in Japan. The Social Democratic Party of Japan has 12,000 members and about 150,000 sympathizers in the trade unions. The social democratic leaders have sold out to the bourgeoisie, at whose behest they try to poison the masses with opportunism, nationalism, and imperialism. A struggle to win over the masses, and particularly a struggle to win over the social democratic workers, is impossible without permanently and energetically exposing the social democratic leaders—their treacherous policy with respect to Chiang Kai-shek's role in the Chinese revolution, their spreading of parliamentary illusions, and their role as helpmates and camp followers of the pseudo-liberal bourgeoisie.

The communists must especially expose the treacherous role of the so-called leftist social democrats. At present, this centrist group leads the Japan Labor-Farmer Party, which has about 6,000 members, and has the support of 5,000 workers and peasants in the trade unions. The leaders of that party, just as all leftist social democrats, are distinguished from their right-wing brothers only by the leftist phrases they use to hide their opportunism from the Communist Party.

The objective position of Japanese capitalism, as well as the historical development of the Japanese labor movement, creates an extremely favorable situation for a struggle against social democratic influence. In Japan the working class does not have strong social democratic organizations that have existed for several decades, and there are no deeply rooted social democratic traditions. The "upper layer" of skilled workers, where reformism is usually strongest, is relatively insignificant in Japan. The average wage is extremely low. The enormous and incessant influx of manpower from the impoverished rural districts, the enormous pressure of agrarian overpopulation, intensified by the American closed-door policy, makes it highly unlikely that the standard of living of the Japanese workers will be raised under capitalism. Of course, since Japanese capitalism is imperialist capitalism, it has the ability to "buy" some sections of the upper strata of the working class. Nevertheless, it can be predicted that reformist efforts to implant American opportunist trade unionism in Japan will fail.

VI. The Communist Party and the Trade Unions. The Communist Party and the Mass Labor Organizations. The United Front Problem.

As already noted, the development of the Communist Party as an independent organization is a decisive factor in the development of the Japanese revolutionary movement. In this connection, the need for a rapid and decisive liquidation of the old mistakes of the leaders of the Communist Party, particularly the deviation represented by Comrade Hoshi, was emphasized. Lately, however, another deviation, a countertendency, has gained much influence in the party. The leader of this tendency is Comrade Kuroki [Fukumoto].

The Communist Party of Japan will be in a position to solve its historical tasks only as a mass party. There is no doubt that the Communist Party of Japan must work energetically in raising its ideological level. It must definitely realize that "without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement." But it must just as definitely realize that without a revolutionary mass struggle, without actual and strong connections with the masses, theory is futile. The Communist Party of Japan must become a workers' party not only in aim but also in composition. Its proletarian core must first be greatly strengthened.

If it is erroneous and disastrous for the Communist Party to adopt the course of dissolving itself in the left wing of the trade union movement, it is no less erroneous for it to be isolated from the mass organizations of the proletariat. The “split and unity theory” advanced by Comrade Kuroki is nothing but an endorsement of such a policy, and differs most radically and decisively from Leninism. Instead of analyzing the concrete tasks facing the Communist Party of Japan and the methods of solving them that are given by history, Comrade Kuroki proceeds from artificially and arbitrarily formulated abstractions and concerns himself with the development and application of principles of logic instead of trying to understand actual relationships.

Mass organizations are, on the one hand, the reservoir from which a communist party gathers new forces, and, on the other, a transmission belt that connects the vanguard with its class, with the whole mass of the workers. The larger the proletarian mass organizations, the greater the potential of the communist party’s reservoir and the broader the audience the communists can address. The policy of splitting up the mass organizations is therefore a policy of draining the reservoirs, limiting the scope of the party’s activity, weakening the connection with the masses and self-isolation from the masses. It is hardly necessary to prove that such policy has nothing in common with bolshevism.

At the same time, the policy of splitting up the mass organizations for all practical purposes means abandoning the struggle for the social democratic workers—abandoning the struggle to win over the centrist workers and abandoning efforts to expose the avowed reformism of the rightists and the tacit reformism of the leftists concealed by leftist social democratic phrases. Such a policy would undoubtedly benefit the social democrats, but it has nothing to do with bolshevism.

The labor movement of Japan is still very young and poorly organized, in spite of the fact that the most advanced section of the Japanese proletariat, having passed through the state of pure syndicalism and trade unionism, is rapidly developing ideologically toward the adoption of the concept of the political class struggle—a concept that is now being adopted by the vanguard of the Japanese proletariat. The Japanese proletariat has no revolutionary traditions. It has no great experience in the class struggle. Out of the 4.5 million factory and transport workers in Japan, only about 300,000 are in the trade unions and political parties, and they are divided into several competing organizations. It is the task of the communists to fight against this situation and to struggle for the creation of mass organizations of the Japanese proletariat. The policy of the Japanese communists of splitting up such organizations as Sodomei, the Japan Peasant Union, and others was therefore radically wrong. The existence of mass proletarian organizations is a prerequisite for the normal and healthy development

of the Communist Party. The struggle against the opportunist and reformist leaders should be conducted in such a way as not to estrange the leftist elements of the trade unions and mass parties; rather, the communists should fight within these organizations by exposing the leaders and winning over the masses from them. Otherwise the communists risk becoming isolated from the mass labor movement. Communists must take active part in the day-to-day struggles of the working class and in so doing assume leadership in those struggles. They must prove to the workers that they are the only staunch and consistent fighters for the interests of the proletariat. This is particularly necessary now, when the bourgeoisie is waging an extensive and energetic offensive against the workers. Broad mass organizations of the proletariat are the only possible basis for communist parties. Not to understand this would be a most dangerous error for the young communist movement of Japan.

The policy of routinely politicizing the trade unions advocated by Comrade Kuroki must therefore be considered absolutely wrong. It is based on a total misconception of the distinctions between a political party and a trade union and of the interchangeability of the two. In effect, this policy leads to self-isolation from the mass movement, to the abandonment of the struggle against the reformists for the conquest of the mass proletarian organizations. What is necessary is not the politicization of the trade unions but the strengthening of the leftist fractions and of Hyogikai influence within the unions, as well as the consolidation and organizational strengthening of Hyogikai itself. The policy of strengthening and consolidating the trade unions and of winning them from within must be extended to the workers' and peasants' parties. The Communist Party must make a special effort to merge the workers' and peasants' party, i.e., the Labor-Farmer Party, which is largely under communist influence, with the Japan Labor-Farmer Party, which is under centrist influence. The desperate opposition shown by the Japan Labor-Farmer Party to such unity must be ended by the workers. This is one of the immediate tasks of the Japanese communists.

Comrade Kuroki's point of view, which leads to the tactical isolation of the party from the masses, leads also to the ruin of the Communist Party as a mass party. This "split and unity theory" places undue emphasis on pure ideology, and completely ignores economic, political, and organizational considerations. This, in turn, leads to an inadmissible overestimate of intellectuals, to isolation from the working masses, to sectarianism, to the idea that the party is a group of "Marxian-minded people"—primarily, of course, intellectuals—and not a militant organization of the working class. The Communist Party must decisively put an end to this distortion of Leninism, which Kuroki himself has already rejected.

To win the social democratic and centrist workers, to conquer the trade

unions and mass parties from within by means of the proposed united front tactic, presents certain difficulties, of course. Particularly in this area, big mistakes may be made by a young party without much experience in the class struggle. With this in mind, the Japanese communists should study the mistakes committed by the Communist Party of China in the Kuomintang. Naturally, the differences between the conditions in China and Japan must be taken into consideration. In adopting the united front tactic, the Japanese Communist Party must not lose its identity. By no means must it submit to the influence of those whom it is combating; it must preserve its absolute independence, both ideologically and organizationally. It stands to reason that in speaking of a united front, one must have in mind not only a united front of the small illegal Communist Party with legal mass organizations such as the Labor-Farmer Party and the Unification Movement League, but also a united front of mass organizations (the Labor-Farmer Party, for instance), under the influence of the Communist Party, with the mass social democratic and centrist organizations.

It goes without saying that the united front should be based solely on working class issues and fought for along class lines, and that no ideological concessions should be made.

In organizing the working class for the struggle against capitalism, the Communist Party should not consider its task done, but should work for the creation of a revolutionary workers' and peasants' bloc and for the achievement of the working class's hegemony in that bloc. The Communist Party should organize and support the struggle of the peasantry for restricted taxation and reduced rents. It should make use of the revolutionary activity of the peasants in the struggle against the war menace. It should lead the struggle of all toilers in Japan for the democratization of the Japanese state and the liquidation of its feudal elements without forgetting the general goal of the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. The Communist Party should keep in close contact with the liberation movement of the Japanese colonies and lend it all possible ideological and organizational support.

The Communist Party must eliminate that which has been the greatest misfortune and shortcoming in its leadership, namely, the sectarian spirit. The slogan "Closer to the Masses" has great meaning today in Japan. In this connection, the complete absence of work among young people should be considered a serious error that should be remedied as soon as possible. This work will be of great importance in connection with the imminent war danger.

Finally, the Communist Party should exert every effort to fulfill its chief obligation as an international revolutionary organization: it must fight against Japanese intervention in China and against the preparation for war against the U.S.S.R.

On the basis of the points outlined herein, the Communist Party of Japan should advance the following program of action and issue the following slogans:

1. Fight against the menace of imperialist war.
2. Hands off the Chinese revolution.
3. To the defense of the U.S.S.R.
4. Absolute independence for the colonies.
5. Dissolution of parliament.
6. Abolition of the monarchy.
7. Universal suffrage for both sexes from the age of 18.
8. Right of assembly, association, coalition, etc.; freedom of speech and of the press.
9. An eight-hour working day.
10. Unemployment insurance.
11. Repeal of antilabor laws.
12. Confiscation of the estates of the Mikado, landlords, the state, and the church.
13. Establishment of a progressive income tax.

These minimum demands and slogans must be linked to the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government and the slogan of the proletarian dictatorship. Only with the help of systematic propaganda related to these slogans will progress be made in the political education of the proletarian masses, in the organization of the workers' and peasants' bloc, and in the preparation of a real revolutionary mass struggle.

The struggle for these demands leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, this struggle will be successful only if there is a sound and ideologically consistent Leninist discipline—a centralized and mass communist party, fighting jointly with the world Communist Party marching shoulder to shoulder with the entire Communist International.

The admission by the Japanese delegation of its mistakes and its adoption of all directives and decisions of the Communist International guarantee that the Communist Party of Japan will be able to overcome the deviations existing within it, will be able to take a correct political and organizational course in its work, and will be able to cope with the great tasks raised before it by history.

The Political Theses of the Japanese Communist Party, April–June 1931

I. The International Situation and the Role of Japanese Imperialism

1. The capitalist world has reached the peak of intensity in an economic crisis that has occurred on top of its own general crisis. The current world economic crisis is therefore aggravating the crisis of world capitalism. Even the United States of America, which has boasted of its “permanent prosperity,” finds itself in the midst of a crisis, contrary to the predictions of the business research institutes that have been supported by every means available to bourgeois science and huge amounts of funds, and by the opportunists who cooperate with those institutes. Similarly, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Japan, France, and other capitalist countries are also in economic crises that are becoming more critical. Production has declined in almost all the capitalist countries—as much as 60 per cent in most of them. The number of unemployed who have been thrown into the streets because of capitalist rationalization of industry and economic crises is increasing every day and has reached a total of 30 million throughout the world, exclusive of the Soviet Union. If families are included, 100 million members of the working masses are being reduced to the level of starvation because of the capitalist system. In order to extricate itself from this crisis and maintain its rule, the capitalist class oppresses and exploits the working class and poor peasantry internally, and oppresses and exploits its colonies externally.

Therefore class contradictions in imperialist countries have been intensified greatly, and in some countries, e.g., Germany, a revolutionary crisis is developing. In addition, with contradictions between imperialist countries and colonial and semicolonial areas increasing and becoming sharper, anti-imperialist movements have become more intense in the latter areas, as exemplified in the progress of revolution in China, the spectacular development of the soviet areas in China, and the new rise of revolutionary national liberation movements in India and various Latin American countries.

2. The fatherland of the world proletariat, the Soviet Union, stands in

The authors' translation of this document is based on a text in *Sekki* that appeared in four installments: April 22, May 17, May 31, and June 15, 1931. A slightly revised text is included in Ishido and Yamabe, *Kominterun Nihon ni Kansuru Teze Shu*, pp. 46–75.

sharp contrast to these imperialist countries. There the establishment of socialism is advancing at an impressive rate under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). For example, industrial production in 1930 showed an increase of 25 per cent over the previous year. In May 1930 the proportion of the farm economy that had been collectivized reached 50 per cent. The living standards of the working class and the wage-earning farmers are constantly improving, and the problem of unemployment has been basically settled. The impressive second year of the "Five-Year Plan," during which the revolutionary task of training a new labor force was undertaken, ended with all goals reached far ahead of schedule, and the third year has begun with good reason to suppose that the "Five-Year Plan" will be completed in four years (or three years, in some fields). In farm villages the work of exterminating the *kulaks*, the last of the capitalist elements, as a class is making spectacular progress, because of the collectivization of the farm economy. Now, the entire national economy, including both industry and agriculture, is under a unified plan. This development, which is possible only under the dictatorship of the proletariat, has created a trust and hope in the Soviet Union among "the workers of the whole world, all working farmers, the suppressed peoples of colonial areas, and the soldiers and sailors of the armies and the navies of capitalist countries," provided a strong revolutionary impulse among them, and invited the boundless hatred of the international bourgeoisie and their agents, the social fascists.

3. Thus, there are two opposing worlds. "There are the worlds of capitalism and of socialism. The clearest expression of the crisis, which has become extremely acute for the capitalist system, is the split of the world economy into capitalist countries and socialist countries" (*Platform of the Communist International*). "The internal strengthening of proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union, the increasing prestige and influence of the Soviet Union among the proletarian masses and the suppressed peoples of colonial areas, and the Soviet Union's growing power represent therefore a continuing strengthening and development of the international socialist revolution" (*ibid.*).

For this reason, the imperialist, thieving countries join ranks to oppose the Soviet Union, although they fight each other for a new division of the world because of the intensification of conflicts of interest and contradictions. "A decisive, major trend in the policies of imperialist countries is the attempt to encircle and then destroy the Soviet Union and to wage a counterrevolutionary war aimed at establishing the bourgeois rule of terror over the world" (*ibid.*). The threat of an imperialist war and a counterrevolutionary war by the imperialist countries against the Soviet Union has become a serious problem. The imperialists and their agents openly talk about these matters and try to convince the workers and peasants of their countries of the necessity of such wars.

4. Japanese imperialism is the main support of counterrevolution in East Asia. Japanese imperialism has long been bringing military pressure against revolutionary China and responding to the revolutionary movements of Korea and Taiwan with persecutions and murders that defy description.

“Along the coasts of the Pacific and in the boundless expanse of Chinese territory, American capital is colliding with the thieving, shameless, evil Japanese imperialism, whose troops have already occupied a considerable sector of China. Japanese imperialism has been waging a destructive war against all the power of the Chinese people, who refuse to submit to the brutal Japanese rule of terror. Hundreds of millions of Chinese workers, peasants, and craftsmen have been subjected to the iron yoke of Japanese imperialism, which expects to launch a defiant attack against the Soviet Union, and which prepares for a bloody showdown with the Chinese people and a dreadful, bloody fight with its competitor, America” (*Declaration of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International*). The Pacific and especially “the boundless area of China” are growing more important as the focal point of “the crisis that is becoming increasingly acute for the capitalist system.” One of the characteristics of Japanese imperialism in 1930–31, assaulted by world economic panic following the “lifting of the gold embargo” that could no longer be postponed, is its consideration of plans for “the invasion of colonial areas, another world war, and a march against the Soviet Union” (*Platform of the Communist International*).

The Japanese army and naval authorities have declared that they regard the Soviet Union and revolutionary China as their potential enemies. Although they failed in the invasion of Siberia in the face of the revolutionary force of the Soviet Union, they made detailed and accurate military maps of that region. By oppressing and more intensively exploiting the workers and poor peasants, they have produced the most effective modern weapons, including poison gas, and increased the military strength needed for their purposes.

Thus, the ruling classes of Japan are attempting to make adequate technical preparations for a war against the Soviet Union; beyond that, they are firmly establishing their ideological position. The undertaking of deliberately militaristic propaganda activities by schools, youth organizations, churches, temples, veterans’ associations, and reactionary societies, the use of bourgeois newspapers, periodicals, and the radio, plus the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate the commercial representative of the Soviet Union—all clearly show that the Japanese ruling classes are promoting a war against the Soviet Union.

The role of Japanese imperialism in the coming second world war will therefore be important. The role of the Japanese proletariat in the great class war that will be carried out on a world scale will be similarly impor-

tant. The intensification of the economic crisis in Japan and the aggravation of international contradictions are causing the class contradictions between capital and labor to deepen and are creating the objective conditions for the development and expansion of the class struggle.

II. The Present Conditions of Japanese Capitalism and the Prospect for Revolution

In light of the international situation, what is the present position of Japanese capitalism? Japan developed capitalism later than other imperialist powers, but its rate of development was extraordinarily rapid. It entered the phase of imperialism without passing through the so-called period of liberalism. This rapid development, however, has been accompanied by a rapid increase of unsolvable contradictions from within. At present Japanese capitalism finds itself in the midst of a serious economic crisis that has arisen on top of its general crisis. Under no circumstances can it be said to be on the upswing of capitalist development. The matter of upswing and downswing in capitalist development is not something that can be judged by short-term increases in industrial production, but must be viewed from the standpoint of the whole capitalist system. It must be discussed from the standpoints of urban and rural areas and of production power and production relationships. The curtailment of industrial production has not been lifted; on the contrary, there has been further curtailment. Mass layoffs of workers are now becoming more frequent in heavy industry than in light industry; over two million unemployed fill the streets. The curtailment of production has in some fields reached levels of more than 50 per cent. The crisis in agriculture is apparent in the abrupt decline in commodity prices. For instance, in June 1930 the prices of six grains excluding rice declined 24 per cent from 1929. Rice production stopped rising during World War I and has since tended to fall.

The Meiji Revolution of 1868 was brought about by the growth of new capitalistic forces within the country and by a bombardment of "cheap commodities"—or the "coming of the black ships." The question of whether to become a colony of foreign capitalism or to make fundamental changes in order to transform Japan into a capitalist nation could not be decided by a "revolution from below," as was done in France, because the Japanese bourgeoisie at that time was still very young. Yet the revolution was not a "revolution from above," as was carried out in Germany. Internal and external relationships left this revolution incomplete; however, there is no doubt that it was a bourgeois-democratic revolution that paved the way for the development of capitalism. Although feudal titles were abolished, the establishment of private landownership transformed most of the lords into landlords, and, in addition, those people who owned land before the

revolution also emerged as landlords. Therefore, in farm villages, most of the peasants did not own land and were exploited as serfs just as before the revolution. Farms were still too small, and the feudal, exploitative relationships existed as before. This was fertile ground for the primitive accumulation of capital. The slavlike living conditions of peasants placed urban workers in a condition of semislavery, with wages on a colonial level. In direct proportion to the intensity of the exploitation and robbing of workers and peasants, the Meiji government under the imperial system guarded the interests of the new bourgeoisie and the landlords (by such means as government loans and the policy of protecting industries and foreign trade). The fact that, no matter how incomplete, this was the first bourgeois revolution in East Asia, the fact that Japan had as neighbors tsarist Russia and feudal China and Korea, and the fact that the attention of the advanced capitalist powers was at the time focused not on the East but on the West—all provided good conditions for the rapid growth of Japanese capitalism in its early years. In addition, Japan won Taiwan, the South Manchurian Railroad, Kwantung Province, and the southern part of Sakhalin through two wars—the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War; she forcibly annexed Korea in 1910; and she took possession of Tsingtao and the South Sea islands in World War I and extended her aggressive, evil designs to Manchuria, Central China, and Siberia. Therefore, by sucking tax blood from its own workers and peasants and fresh blood from the peoples of colonial and semicolonial areas, the young capitalist country grew fast.

Japan is now a highly developed imperialist country. Take concentration of production as one example: workers in factories with 500 employees or more constitute approximately 35 per cent of the total factory labor force. In the case of factories with 100 or more employees, the number of workers amounts to 58 per cent of the total. The real power in banking, industry, and mining is in the hands of four or five financial cliques such as the Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Yasuda, and Sumitomo. This concentration exceeds that of Germany. Under such circumstances, every question must be viewed “from the standpoint of imperialism” (Lenin).

Ruling status in the economic world guarantees ruling status in politics. Although the feudal forces, which had to open the way for the development of the capitalist system in order to prevent their own complete destruction in the face of historical inevitability, still remained a strong power in the early Meiji years, they were later to see their political influence reduced as the bourgeoisie increased its economic power and political importance under “clan government” and “bureaucratic administration.” However, the forces of the landlords and bourgeoisie have always agreed and still agree on the policies of imperialist aggression and oppression of workers and farmers. The state power of Japan is in the hands of the bour-

geoisie under the hegemony of finance capitalism and the landlords. It would be a mistake beyond correction to regard production relationships in farm villages in contemporary Japan as the same as the relationship between capitalists and workers because of the leading position of industry over agriculture or because of the existence of many absentee landlords and landlord-businessmen. It is also a serious error to describe landlords as capitalists and to deny that they have political power as landlords. Those who hold such views do not understand the true character of the agrarian problem in this country. At present landlords occupy a subordinate position with regard to political power, but this is not to deny the fact that they exist as a force. The imperial system has now become an instrument for the fascistic oppression and exploitation of the workers and toiling peasants by the ruling classes led by finance capital. Thus, the fundamental class contradiction in this period is the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

At this stage Japanese capitalism is confronted by a serious economic crisis. This crisis comes on top of the general crisis of Japanese capitalism. What were formerly good conditions for the development of Japanese capitalism have now become a hindrance. The attempt of the bourgeoisie to profit by reducing the living standards of the proletariat, which has been placed in a condition of colonial semislavery, cannot help but contribute to the mass advance of the workers. The landownership of parasitic landlords, which once helped capitalism to develop, has for the same reason brought about the present serious agrarian crisis and has become an important aspect of the capitalist economic crisis and a barrier to further development. The brutal exploitation and oppression of the vast masses of people in colonial areas have caused these people to rise as a powerful army in the movement against Japanese imperialism. Among the neighboring countries, there are revolutionary China, led by the famed Chinese Communist Party and centering in soviet areas that include several provinces, and the Soviet Union, the fatherland of the world proletariat, which has replaced tsarist Russia and is carrying on the task of socialist economic construction as a rising world power. In addition, the problems of the Pacific have become one of the major concerns of the various imperialist powers. Under these circumstances, Japanese capitalism is harassed; furthermore, all of these contradictions cannot be resolved within the framework of capitalism. The need to settle them is urgent.

The conditions outlined above indicate that the prerequisites for a socialist revolution are growing rapidly in Japan. There is no way to resolve these contradictions except to replace capitalist dictatorship with proletarian dictatorship. At the same time, there is an urgent need to settle the land question in farm villages. It cannot be settled by stopgap measures. The "creation of owner-cultivators," which the bourgeois-landlord govern-

ment calls "relief for farm villages," has proved to be a heavy burden upon the mass of exploited toiling peasants. The bourgeoisie, which is closely tied with landlords, is incapable of finding a radical solution to the question. This is because it is impossible to confiscate the land of the landlords and give it to the peasants without ruining the landlords, and to overthrow the landlords would mean that the bourgeoisie would not only lose an important support but would also destroy itself. The land question can be tentatively solved only by giving land to the toiling peasants. It is to this end that the masses of exploited toiling peasants have risen. However, since the distribution of land among the peasants permits the private ownership of land, it is not socialism. In this sense, it is part of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Thus, the nature of the coming revolution in Japan is a "proletarian revolution that involves extensive bourgeois-democratic tasks" (*Platform of the Communist International*).

The driving force of the coming Japanese revolution is the proletariat. The proletariat is the only class that can struggle decisively and to a final conclusion against the power of capitalism. The proletariat is of decisive importance in our country's production relationships and is an uncompromising, revolutionary force. The proletariat does not aim at a reform that will replace one form of exploitation with another, but has as its principal aim the abolition of exploitation itself and hence of classes themselves. However, the proletariat is firmly opposed to petty bourgeois self-complacency and anarchistic fancies. It is also completely opposed to the bourgeois liberalist idea that reform of the social system can be effected by a reshuffle of government personnel. It opposes any form of bourgeois dictatorship, either bourgeois democracy or fascism, and it maintains that only the establishment of proletarian democracy or proletarian dictatorship (which is the transitional period from capitalism to communism and historically a relatively long period) can destroy all types of exploitation. The position of the proletariat in production—that is, the very nature of its structure—creates the conditions for it to carry out its historical mission. The proletariat grew as capitalism developed; from birth it grew as the "gravedigger of capitalism." The proletariat of Japan is growing in this manner. Nothing can be more opportunistic and traitorous than to refuse to believe that the Japanese proletariat is capable of carrying out the historical mission of the proletariat because it does not have experience in revolutionary struggles on the same scale as its counterparts in tsarist Russia, imperial Germany, and France. The Japanese proletariat has shown clearly in its struggle in the past, particularly in its struggle in the past ten years, that it is a great revolutionary force.

In addition, the Japanese proletariat has as powerful allies in the revolution the large agricultural proletariat and the poor peasants. The heavy burden of poverty in rural villages within the capitalist system has been

concentrated on the poor peasants, particularly tenant farmers who are bound in relationships of semifeudal exploitation, and on the agricultural proletariat, whose proportion has been steadily increasing in recent years. These strata can provide the driving force for a revolutionary settlement of the land question, that is, the agrarian revolution. The intensification of class struggle in rural villages in the face of the current crisis in agriculture proves that the vast mass of poor peasants are demanding a revolutionary settlement of the land question from below. The struggle against the landlords will be a major attack on the finance bourgeoisie, which holds hegemony in political power. However, experience shows that a thorough solution of the land question and the peasant problem is possible only under proletarian dictatorship. Genuine liberation of the mass of the agricultural proletariat and poor peasants is not possible by equal distribution of land, but only by reorganization of the entire national economy, including the rural economy, along socialist lines. This has been learned from the great October Revolution. In the present stage of struggle, the peasant struggle for the confiscation of the land of the large landlords, the emperor, the state, shrines, and temples, and its distribution among the people who till it, can be correctly developed under the leadership of the urban proletariat. However, the proletariat, on their part, are unlikely to achieve victory in the struggle against the finance bourgeoisie without receiving assistance from the great mass of the agricultural proletariat and poor peasants, who aim at destroying the power of the landlords—an important support for the capitalist system. A revolutionary alliance between the urban proletariat and the rural poor peasants is thus a prerequisite for the victory of the proletariat in the coming revolution in Japan. In fact, the objective conditions necessary for such an alliance have been fully provided. However, in such an alliance only the proletariat can and must hold hegemony (leadership). We must emphasize this point particularly. The urban proletariat must push forward with the struggle against the bourgeoisie and strengthen its vanguard organization (the Communist Party); at the same time, it must support the revolutionary demands of the mass of poor peasants and take the lead in this struggle. The proletariat's development of the revolutionary struggle in urban areas and its revolutionary leadership of and assistance to the class struggle in farm villages will guarantee the establishment of a revolutionary alliance of workers and peasants under the hegemony of the proletariat, thereby creating a great force to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie and landlords.

In the agrarian revolution in this country, in addition to the agricultural proletariat and poor peasants, small farmers and part of the lower stratum of middle farmers can be mobilized as a revolutionary force. Moreover, because of the international situation described above, the proletariat, the driving force of revolution in this country, has as powerful allies the sup-

pressed peoples of Korea and Taiwan, the mass of workers and peasants of revolutionary China, and the revolutionary working classes of every country in the world, under the leadership of the working class of the Soviet Union.

Under these conditions, the immediate goal of the struggle of our Japanese proletariat is to overthrow the bourgeois-landlord power in the imperial system, under which finance capital holds sway, and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. The struggle of the rising urban proletariat; the intensification and sharpening of the struggle; the increasing pressure from below by the broad masses that are uniting for the struggle; the marked growth of revolutionary forces in the farm villages; the brutal policies of oppression by the ruling classes against these tendencies; the strong policies of exploitation and suppression of the workers, peasants, and the oppressed masses of the colonial areas, which the ruling classes have conducted as a means of escaping the economic crisis; and the desperate preparations for a new war of imperialism—these conditions increase the prospects for revolution in this country. The view that Japan today faces a political crisis is wrong, and to deny the potential of the many internal and international conditions, which are bound to develop into a political crisis, is a hopelessly opportunistic view. Japanese capitalism constitutes one of the weakest links in the international capitalist system.

The basic slogans of the vanguard of the Japanese proletariat, the Japanese Communist Party, must be:

1. Overthrow of the dictatorship of finance capitalism. Overthrow of the power of the bourgeoisie under the leadership of finance capitalism, the landlords, and the emperor, and establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.
2. Nationalization by the proletariat of banks, industries, mines, and transportation and communication facilities.
3. Confiscation of the land of the emperor, the big landlords, the state, the shrines, and the temples, and distribution of that land to the toiling peasants.
4. Complete independence for Korea, Taiwan, and other colonies.
5. Opposition to imperialist war and support of the Soviet Union and revolution in China and India.

III. The Tasks of the Japanese Communist Party

The Communist Party is the only revolutionary party of the proletariat. Only the Communist Party can direct the carrying out of the historical mission of the proletariat—from the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the founding of a communist society. The name of the Communist Party, supplied in 1841 by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

and revived by the Bolsheviks in 1917, has become known for the organization of struggles by the proletariat throughout the world, including Japan. It cannot be replaced by any other name. Whether the power of the Communist Party is great or small is the decisive factor for the success or failure of the proletariat in the beginning stage of revolution.

As we have seen above, although the objective conditions in Japan are favorable for the growth of the revolutionary power of the proletariat and the development of its activity, the subjective conditions for revolution are extremely weak. This is most apparent in the immaturity and lack of strength of the party of the proletariat, the Japanese Communist Party. Although positive action by the Japanese Communist Party and expansion of its organization have never been so badly needed, and although all the objective conditions for such efforts exist, the party is too weak to meet the demands. However, the fact that the Japanese Communist Party is weak does not mean that it ought to be replaced by another party. The Japanese Communist Party is the sole dynamic force of revolution in Japan today. The greatest efforts of the Japanese proletariat must be concentrated on this point. To refer to "Japanese peculiarities," to hamper the organization of the Communist Party in the name of "historical necessity," or to advocate that a so-called proletarian political party be a prerequisite for the organization of the Communist Party prevents the consolidation of the revolutionary power of the proletariat and, consequently, is reactionary because it postpones indefinitely the victory of the Japanese proletariat.

The Japanese Communist Party is the Japanese branch of the Comintern. There is only one communist party in each country, and it is the united political and revolutionary organization of the vanguard of the proletariat in that country. Factional activity is not permitted. The Comintern, which provides unified direction for the world revolutionary movement, would never permit any attempt to form more than one communist party in each country. If such an attempt is made in the name of the Comintern, it must be strongly denounced. The Japanese Communist Party is the only revolutionary party of the Japanese proletariat; its goal is the liberation of the proletariat. It has fought, is fighting, and will continue to fight for this objective.

The Japanese proletariat has undoubtedly been on the defensive since the arrests of March 15, 1928. This is apparent in the fact that an expansion of the Communist Party has not been achieved. The Japanese Communist Party failed to secure the trust and support of the broad mass of workers. This was the result of two tendencies within the party—a tendency toward right-wing opportunism that arose from an incapacity to understand the leading role of the Communist Party (for example, the tendency to advocate organization of a Labor-Farmer League for Political Freedom), and a tendency toward extreme leftist sectarianism, which was intensified after a number of outstanding leaders were arrested on April 16, 1929.

Lately, the party has been a minority group; with its close ties with the masses weakened, it has not been a centralized organization for popular struggles. We should not justify this on the grounds of suppression and persecution by the ruling classes. We have been firmly opposed to the undisguised opportunism of viewing the Communist Party as useless or saying "Let us reconsider it after a little more political freedom is allowed" (when political freedom can be obtained only by mobilizing the mass of workers in revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party). A considerable number of intellectuals who were once in the communist camp fled when they saw the temporary defeat of the proletariat. (The same persons now, in 1931, come forward under the name "The True Comintern Group—The Central Executive Committee of the Worker Faction of the Japanese Communist Party.") Despite our many errors and defects, we have, under the most difficult circumstances, held firm the flag of the Japanese branch of the Comintern, raised it high, and continued to protect it. We have continued to struggle decisively against dissolutionist tendencies. This was absolutely correct; it is a prerequisite for organizing a mass communist party as the political body of the vanguard of the proletariat. The trust of the proletariat in the party is increasing because of our consistent revolutionary activity.

The present economic crisis, which has become intense beyond the general crisis of Japanese capitalism, has deepened to an extreme class contradiction between capital and labor. Even small economic strikes by the proletariat have been crushed through the mobilization of all the machinery of the state, such as the police, the gendarmerie, reactionary organizations, and bourgeois newspapers. This fact gives a strong political tone to today's economic struggles. Economic struggles have been spreading. For example, the number of labor disputes in 1930 increased by 415 over 1929, and, whereas in 1930 there were more disputes in light industries, in 1931 there were more disputes—and more extensive ones—in the heavy industries. Strikes and disputes in the small factories are leading to unification of workers in the same industry. The demands of the struggle of the proletariat are no longer negative; in general they represent a counterattack—a swing from passive defense to positive action. It is totally wrong either to overestimate or underestimate this fact. The expansion of economic struggles under the conditions of the establishment of the hegemony of finance capital and the fascistization of state agencies is of great political importance, and requires that the Japanese Communist Party redouble its efforts to prepare, organize, and direct struggles of the masses and through these struggles to build our party into a true bolshevik mass party.

Since a communist party is a political union of the vanguard of the proletariat, to strengthen and expand the Japanese Communist Party is an important duty of all the revolutionary workers of Japan. The Japanese proletariat, aware of its own great revolutionary energy, must participate

boldly in the strengthening and expansion of the organization of the Japanese Communist Party—the Japanese branch of the Comintern—which, though still weak, continues to defend the revolutionary tradition of the Japanese proletariat. The proletariat cannot find its own political party in any party but a communist party; a communist party is the only party that can lead the struggle to overthrow the power of capital and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In order to strengthen and expand the Japanese Communist Party, we must organize and lead all the struggles of the mass of workers and poor peasants. For this purpose, the party must arm itself with strict Marxist-Leninist principles—politically, tactically, and organizationally. Since these principles are now embodied internationally in the policies of the Comintern, the party must be organized, not only in form but in substance, as a branch of the Comintern. Party members must not be united simply on the basis of theory and consciousness; they must also recognize the authority of the policies of the Comintern and the platform and regulations of the Japanese Communist Party, work actively and with faith and confidence as members of the party organization, willingly obey party rules, and pay party dues.

The party must be organized directly on the basis of the working masses; that is, it must be constructed on the basis of factory cells, which provide the very source from which the party can absorb the demands of the masses and grow. The organizational principle of the party is democratic centralism; liaison between factory cells and superior organs at every level must be established by elections, with regulations representing the organizational will of all the members.

Out of necessity the party uses an illegal sector against the ruling classes. The secrets of this illegal sector must be kept on penalty of death. However, “the independent policies and activities of the party must always be shown openly to the masses” (*The Political Theses of the Japanese Communist Party*, published in 1928). The party must fight resolutely against opportunistic attitudes that would mask its policies on the pretext of illegality and would limit it to whispered conversations in dark doorways.

The party must strengthen and expand its organization with a clear view of its task of winning over the majority of the proletariat by independently organizing and directing the economic and political struggles of the working masses. Our slogans are therefore “Into the Masses!” and “Into Large Factories!”

IV. The Immediate Important Tactics of the Japanese Communist Party

1. *The Labor Union Movement.* The problems of bolshevizing the party and expanding its membership are closely related to the matter of organizing and directing the struggle; in other words, mass actions will assist

the development of the party and its independent activity. "To expand the organization through struggles!" is what our party has always advocated. The party must establish liaison with mass organizations and become closely connected with the working masses. Labor unions are the most important mass organizations existing in this field.

The party's attitude toward labor unions must be one decisive struggle against the extreme-leftist sectarian and right-wing opportunistic tendencies of the past. In concrete terms, the party must implement the resolutions adopted at the Fifth Congress of the Profintern, particularly the "Tasks of the Revolutionary Labor Unions in Japan." Labor unions are basic organizations for the struggle of the working masses. The Communist Party must use them as intermediaries between itself and the masses and must make them into schools where the masses can learn communism. Therefore the activities of the party within labor unions, whether they are right-wing or left-wing, are especially important today. Party members must take the lead in all struggles and work devotedly in order to win over the working masses to the camp of revolution.

The deepening of the economic crisis, the increasing concentration of capital and production, the interlocking of the state and business, and the consequent concentrated attacks and reactionary policies against the working class (the persecution of radical workers, not to speak of communists, and the use of violence in suppressing strikes) have intensified the class struggle between labor and capital in Japan. The number of strikes and disputes has increased. These struggles present a most miserable sight. The working masses have shown their revolutionary potential in the length of their strikes and in the radicalism of the forms of struggle. However, the picture has been distorted because the revolutionary labor unions led by our party are still very weak, which means that our party has failed to play a positive role in the revolutionary labor unions. Today, at a time when the reformist leaders of unions are cooperating with the authorities to crush and destroy strikes and disputes one after another, and at a time when the wave of popular protest among the working masses is unusually high, it is almost impossible for our party to win over the mass of workers who are turning to the left without strengthening and expanding the revolutionary labor unions. It is an important task of the members of our party to unite—in fact as well as in name—the National Council of Japanese Labor Unions (Zenkyo) as the Japanese branch of the Profintern. Party members, as members of revolutionary labor unions, must work vigorously and positively in factories and among the masses of unemployed for the development of a united revolutionary labor union movement. They must fight ruthlessly against all policies, no matter how high-sounding their aims, that scheme to divide the revolutionary labor union movement in our country.

The party must concentrate all its activities in the labor union move-

ment in the centers of production—factories and workshops—and among the unemployed. Basic and vigorous activity to transform the discontent and complaints of the working masses into concrete demands and to mobilize the masses into struggles for the realization of those demands is an important aspect of our leadership of the economic struggles because “government has never represented a more concentrated economy than it does today” (Lozovsky). The skillful combination of economic and political struggles is an important factor in the policies of the revolutionary labor unions. We must fight uncompromisingly against any reformist labor union policies that attempt to separate politics from economics. Only this type of struggle and activity will permit the organization of mass political strikes that the objective conditions call for. We must fight to the end against the type of extreme-leftist sectarianism that taught that handbills or several issues of “newspapers” could bring about “armed demonstrations” or “armed strikes,” that theorized about a “general strike” without taking concrete steps to organize the masses, or that misled the working masses into believing that a strike in a small factory with only 50 or 100 employees was a strike with revolutionary significance for the class struggle. Revolutionary labor unions must not only propose correct policies but take the lead in implementing them, thereby showing the working masses their organizational capabilities and correct policies. This is a condition for the materialization of mass political strikes.

The revolutionary labor unions of Japan, centering around the National Council of Japanese Labor Unions, must secure the right to legal existence. They must not limit their activities to the scope that bourgeois laws permit, but must break through the confinements of the law by increasing their strength. Under present circumstances, when revolutionary labor unions, like the party, are compelled to exist illegally, utmost precaution must be taken against confusing the party with the unions. A labor union member in a factory acts almost like a party member, but the fact that he has not joined the party indicates that the movement to win new party members has been inadequate. Capable workers trained in the activities of illegal unions must be induced to join the party en masse without fear. The most successful way to get the revolutionary labor unions legalized is to secure new party members on a mass basis. In this field such factionalism as existed in the past must be abolished.

The party must establish fractions not only in the member unions of the National Council of Japanese Labor Unions but also in such reformist unions as Sodomei, the Seamen’s Union, the National Labor Union League (Zenkoku Domei), and the General Federation of Government Enterprise Workers (Kangyo Sodomei). Activities within reformist unions must be directed toward forming a strong revolutionary opposition and leading the members of that opposition to join the National Council of

Japanese Labor Unions en masse. We must work to win the masses over to the revolutionary camp by supporting the daily, concrete demands of the masses and struggling bravely, and not by automatic ideological opposition to reformist labor union leaders. As the resolution of the Profintern instructs, it is particularly important to create revolutionary factory committees, factory caretakers, councils of factory and workshop representatives, and women's committees to mobilize the working masses, both organized and unorganized. In addition, since there has been much talk among the mass of working people about the necessity and usefulness of strike committees and mass struggle committees elected by the masses themselves, we must pay more attention to struggles that are developing. As long as we remain unprepared and not alert enough to recognize the beginning of an incident, the struggles of working people will continue to be spontaneous, and our party and revolutionary labor unions will not be able to avoid simply following on the heels of the masses.

The labor unions of Japan, fragmentized on the whole, fall into two basic categories: revolutionary and reformist. The ruling classes and their servants, the social democrats, are doing everything in their power to weaken the power of the Japanese proletariat, already weakened by organizational division. The formation of a right-wing federation on the one hand, and the dissolution of the union front, on the other—these are their labor union policies. The revolutionary labor unions, while clearly defining their position of “class against class,” must work to establish a “united front from below based on the principle of class struggle.” This is not something that can be established by discussion or agreement with reformist leaders. It is possible only through the mobilization of the broad mass of workers under the characteristic demands of the revolutionary labor unions.

The revolutionary labor unions must be the leaders in the struggle of the poor peasants. Extensive use must be made of the wealth of experience that our party had in this field before the March 15 and April 16 arrests. In this area, too, the party members must be the initiators.

2. *The Peasants' Movement.* The semifeudal type of high rent in kind imposed on tiny farms under imperialist rule and exploitation exerts unbearable pressures on Japanese farm villages. In particular, the present agrarian crisis has pushed the toiling peasants to the verge of explosion. Their struggle against parasitic landlordism and semifeudal exploitation and their struggle against imperialist domination and exploitation are focused on the struggle for settlement of the land question under the slogan of “Land to the Peasants”—the confiscation of the land of the large landlords, the emperor, the state, shrines, and temples, and the distribution of land to cultivators. Nor can their struggle against taxes, debts, and electricity and fertilizer costs be overlooked. Struggles in court are now

giving way to mass action; there is a constant struggle against the state power represented by such agencies as the police and the army, often in the form of riots and disturbances.

In contrast to the Trotskyism of the dissolutionists, our party, which properly evaluates the importance of the agrarian revolution in the revolution of the Japanese proletariat and the revolutionary energy of the poor peasants, must put forward the maximum demands of the peasants and, in supporting their struggles, draw strength from them. At the same time, consideration must be given to the principle "through struggle to a higher stage of struggle."

Only the Communist Party can secure a revolutionary alliance of workers and peasants. All the legal proletarian parties, which unite workers, peasants, small capitalists, small merchants, salaried employees, Greater-Asianists, and nationalists on an individual or electoral district basis, secure hegemony for the petty bourgeoisie instead of for the proletariat, perpetuate imperialist domination by fascist dictatorship, and therefore do not constitute a revolutionary alliance of workers and peasants for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. To organize the village proletariat into the National Council of Japanese Labor Unions and to organize peasant committees centering around the village proletariat and poor peasants are important and urgent tasks for our party. Our party must not neglect to strengthen and expand the National Congress of Peasant Unions as the union of all poor peasants—a merger of all peasant unions—and develop it into a Red Peasant Union.

In order to organize and direct the struggles of the village proletariat and poor peasants and in order to form a close union of the urban proletariat and the mass of poor peasants, the party must take concrete steps such as sending urban workers into the villages. Mutual assistance is very important in the case of strikes—for example, the organization of a conference of representatives from labor unions and peasant unions, a liaison conference of factory committees, the organization of a joint-struggle committee, the dispatch of representatives of labor strike bodies to rural villages. In order to secure a revolutionary alliance between workers and peasants and in order to win over workers and peasants to the red flag of the party, the party must carry out concrete policies systematically and purposefully. The consumers' union and the cooperative movement will be able to play a role for this purpose. All these tasks must be accompanied by work to establish and expand party cells in the farm villages.

3. *The United Front from Below Based on the Class Struggle—The Struggle Against Social Fascism.* The proletariat must oppose all bourgeois ideas and organizations. This is an indispensable condition for the victory of the proletariat. Social democracy, which has become social fascism, is bourgeois thought that is being spread among the proletariat

and is paralyzing the revolutionary power of the proletariat. Accordingly, a struggle against it is necessary while uniting the revolutionary forces.

The Social Masses Party openly advocates monarchism. It urges "Long Live the Emperor" and "Down with the Soviet Union." Opposition to the Japanese Communist Party and the Comintern is its golden rule. The National Masses Party is an "Imperial Standard Party." On this point, it is no different from the Social Masses Party. Treachery in strikes and protection of the interests of the landlords by deceiving poor peasants are its specialities. The New Labor-Farmer Party of Oyama [Ikuo's] faction, while paying lip service to the principle that the only party of the proletariat is the Communist Party, is in fact preventing leftist-inclined workers from joining the Communist Party. Oyama's faction has bolted from "left-wing" social democracy to right-wing social democracy.

The group around the magazine *Labor-Farmer* is a group of traitors who oppose the resolutions of the Comintern and are trying, in the name of revolutionary Marxism, to split the revolutionary workers of Japan. Their "consistent theory" is to dispense with the Communist Party and organize a legal mass party. They quote Marxist and Leninist literature to justify this traitorous concept. Recently they have established secret ties with the leaders of the National Masses Party and have been serving as propagandists for this "Imperial Standard Party." To deny the organization of the vanguard of the proletariat—the Communist Party—is a necessary course for them. Although they are "left-wing" social democrats, they act no differently than the right wing.

The dissolutionist faction (Mizuno Shigeo, Asano Akira, Kadoya Hiroshi, Murao Satsuo, Kikuta Zengoro, Nakamura Yoshiaki, Minami Kiichi, and others), which emerged from the weakest part of our party and which was expelled from it after the collapse of the Labor-Farmer faction, has actively championed the social democracy of the extreme right while posing as a genuine left wing. First, they support the monarchy; they have gone so far as to say that in the coming revolution in Japan the proletariat should join forces with the powers behind the throne and that the existence of the emperor is not incompatible with a proletarian revolution. Second, they are imperialistic xenophobes, as witness their demand for separation from the Comintern and foreign revolutionary movements. Third, they propose autonomy—not independence—for colonies; they do not apply Marxist-Leninist theory to the question of nationalism. Fourth, they reject the agrarian revolution; they fail to understand what the main course of the peasant revolutionary movement is, and deny the decisive importance of the agrarian revolution in the coming proletarian revolution, thereby falling into Trotskyism. (Asana Akira stated that there were no feudal agricultural relationships in Japan; Nakamura Yoshiaki said that the imperial court should not be deprived of its lands; all of them held

that the separate organization of the village proletariat is unnecessary.) Their faction was not formed as a right wing within the Communist Party; from the beginning it was formed as an extreme right wing in opposition to the Japanese Communist Party and the Comintern. At first, the dissolutionists urged that the party be dissolved, then they threatened to leave the party, and finally they said that they would break up the party (instead they were expelled). Now, dubbing themselves a "Central Committee of the Workers' Faction of the Japanese Communist Party," they are demonstrating their loyalty to the ruling classes by heaping abuse upon the Japanese Communist Party. They are harassing the revolutionary front with their seemingly revolutionary—too revolutionary—articles and theses. Their efforts to destroy the trust of the mass of workers in the Comintern and Profintern through false propaganda have been fruitless; their threats to dissolve, leave, and break up the party have been rewarded by an increase in trust in the party by the workers. So now, they play their last trump: they say, "The Comintern is all right, but the existing Japanese Communist Party is false. We represent the main current of the Comintern. Look at our excellent political theses!" Theirs is a wicked, disruptive policy. We must fight this faction to the end.

The common characteristics of the "left-wing" social democrats are (1) revolutionary words and reformist deeds; (2) opposition to the Communist Party, and (3) rejection of struggles against social democracy. All of them hold that Japan lacks the economic base for the development of social democracy. Japanese social democracy is rapidly turning into social fascism, but has not yet reached that point. We will fight on by disclosing its nature from within and from without. The social democrats automatically compare the conditions under which British, American, German, and French social democracy originated with conditions in Japan. Thinking only in terms of quantity, they do not take into account social structure and class relations as political factors. They act internationally in concert with the Second International and nationally, under the flag of monarchism. Thus, as direct agents in the suppression of the revolutionary worker movement, the Japanese social democrats are obviously social fascists.

The tactics of our party against all of these organizations call for a decisive struggle against them. Above all, we must conduct a forceful struggle against the "left-wing" social fascists. The Communist Party must not build factions within a "proletarian party"; to do so is a mistake. We must win over the masses under the influence of other parties to our party's side by directing the struggles and representing the interests of the workers and the toiling, exploited peasants at their places of employment. In order to establish a united front of the masses based on a genuine class struggle we must unite a large number of people and lead them in struggle

under party slogans. The working masses are moving spontaneously toward unity in order to make their struggle effective. Strikes, labor disputes, and tenancy disputes have made it an urgent task for our party to make use of such tactics. We must correct the mistake of remaining on the sidelines while the masses are moving. We must devote all our energies to work among the masses. Party members must not confine themselves to the tasks of propaganda and agitation, but must be active organizers of struggles. Without such activity, it is impossible to implement the policy of "bringing classes into opposition with each other" or to establish "a united front based on the class struggle." The decisive struggle against social fascism and, above all, its "left wing" is one of the important tasks of our party and an indispensable condition in the struggle to win over a majority of the proletariat.

4. *The Youth Movement.* As the result of the growth of capitalism in general and the rationalization of industry in particular, the position of young workers in production is becoming increasingly important and their role in the class struggle greater. The economic crisis is particularly acute for the weak sector of the working class—youth and women. The party must properly assess these developments and be active in winning over the working youth to the communist side.

The party must form close ties with the Japanese Communist Youth League, giving the league more attention and direction. However, the league must maintain its complete independence and initiative. The lack of close ties between the party and the league often involves the danger of making the league into a junior communist party. The party must assume full responsibility for this. Indifference to the strengthening and expansion of the Communist Youth League is totally wrong. The league, along with the revolutionary labor unions, must be made an effective reservoir of the party. The party must encourage the antifeudal, antimilitarist, and anti-capitalist demands of the mass of young people, whose main strength rests in the young workers, and mobilize them as a powerful opposition force against imperialism.

5. *The Women's Movement.* The development of capitalism is increasing the importance of working women in production. In particular, the energetic capitalist rationalization of industry is causing the replacement of the skilled workers with the unskilled, adults with youths, and men with women. Working women are exploited as part of the working class and are subject to heavy pressures because of historical conditions (such as the feudal family system). Only the victory of the proletariat over capitalism can liberate working women from these pressures. At the same time, a victory of the proletariat is impossible without widely organizing these working women, who occupy an increasingly important position in production, for the class struggle.

Working women in Japan's capitalist production and those of poor households in the agricultural economy have made a remarkable advance into the class struggle recently. Our party must work actively to win over these working women to its own organization. The words of the resolution on Japanese problems adopted by the Fifth Profintern Congress—"To neglect to organize working women is to serve the bourgeoisie"—apply as well to our party's policy toward working women.

Our party must struggle for the admission of working women into the unions on an equal footing with the men in order to win them over to our side. At the same time it must assess the particular position held by women and struggle to organize them into special committees (such as women's committees in factories and conferences of women's representatives). It is a great mistake to ignore the specific interests of women by lumping working women in with workers in general or by overlooking their important position in the working class. It is especially important to train the activist elements among the working women.

As for "the women's rights movement," our party must constantly expose the reactionary nature of this petty bourgeois movement. "You communists would introduce community of women, screams the whole bourgeoisie in chorus. . . . The bourgeois sees his wife as a mere instrument of production . . . the objective of the communists is to do away with the position of women as mere instruments of production. . . . The communists have no need to introduce community of women; it has existed almost from time immemorial. . . . It is self-evident that the abolition of the present system of production must bring with it the abolition of the community of women springing from that system, i.e., of prostitution both public and private" (Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*).

"However terrible and disgusting the dissolution of the old family ties under the capitalist system may appear, modern industry, by assigning to women, young people, and children an important part in the process of production outside the domestic sphere, creates a new economic foundation for a higher form of the family and of the relations between the sexes. . . . Moreover, it is obvious that the collective working group, being composed of individuals of both sexes and all ages, must necessarily, under suitable conditions, become a source of human development. But in its spontaneously developed, brutal, capitalist form, where the worker exists for the process of production and not for the fruits of his own labor, that condition is a pestiferous source of corruption and slavery" (Marx, *Capital*). Our party is based on this principle with regard to the women's movement in general. The words of Marx, the father of scientific socialism, are alive in the Soviet Union—the fatherland of socialism—which was brought into existence by the Bolshevik Party led by Lenin, the great leader of revolution.

6. *The Unemployment Movement.* Unemployment is a necessary product of the capitalist system. The unemployed today are permanently unemployed. The ranks of the unemployed are being swelled by those who lose jobs because of capitalist rationalization of industry (structural unemployment) and because of the economic crisis. In Japan the number of those unemployed now exceeds two million, and the figure is increasing every day. Today it is of great political significance to organize the unemployed and mobilize them for struggles against capital.

The party must raise such concrete demands as the exemption of the unemployed from housing, gas, water, and transportation charges, the transfer of military funds to support the unemployed, and the immediate enforcement of a state-supported unemployment insurance plan. The party must struggle to organize the unemployed into special leagues or committees (cooperating with, but organizationally separate, from labor unions). At the same time, the party must conduct propaganda and agitation among the working masses to the effect that the solution of the unemployment question is possible only by overthrowing the capitalist system of production, which creates unemployment (a fact that has been proven by experience in the Soviet Union). The most important aspect of the unemployment movement is the organization of a cooperative effort on the part of the employed and the unemployed workers, because an increase in the number of unemployed means a lower living standard for the proletariat as a whole. An increase in the industrial reserve army results in deterioration in the living standards of the employed workers. "The unemployment question is a question for the proletariat as a whole, for today's employed workers might be tomorrow's unemployed" (Lozovsky). The party must conduct an uncompromising struggle against any opportunistic view that would neglect organizing the unemployed on the excuse of the difficulty involved, and against the social fascists, who ignore the problem altogether.

7. *International Affairs.* One of the greatest deficiencies of our party is that we have failed to popularize the important problems of the international proletariat as political problems of the Japanese proletariat, one of the components of the international proletariat. Although this deficiency has begun to be corrected to some extent—i.e., the International Day Against Unemployment and May Day—this is not enough. In particular, we must point out that the international significance and revolutionary meaning of the glorious success of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, as well as the significance and importance of the Chinese revolution and the revolutionary and national liberation movements in Taiwan and Korea, have not been related to the life of Japan's working masses in the factories and workshops. The party must proceed vigorously to overcome this deficiency, starting with its central newspaper and other party publications, as well as publications under its influence. The greatest international

issue for the Communist Party is to organize an effective struggle against a second war of imperialism; this struggle must be linked with the struggle for the support of the Soviet Union and positive support of and liaison with the Chinese revolution and the revolutionary movements in Korea and Taiwan.

“The Soviet Union is the true fatherland of the proletariat—the strongest protector of the proletariat’s interests and the main force for its international liberation. Accordingly, the duty of the international proletariat is to help the socialist construction to succeed in the Soviet Union and to use all means to defend the country of proletarian dictatorship against attack by the capitalist powers”; “The world situation has already made the proletarian revolution the order of the day. All the conditions of world politics are unavoidably focused on a central point—the struggle of the world bourgeoisie against the Russian Soviet Republic, which must steadfastly support all soviet movements of progressive workers everywhere and the national liberation movements of colonies and suppressed peoples” (Lenin).

“In the event of an attack by the imperialist powers against the Soviet Union or of a war against it, a struggle must be conducted to overthrow the imperialist governments under the slogan of the dictatorship of the international proletariat and unity with the Soviet Union” (*Comintern Platform*).

Those who are not prepared to bring the working masses to oppose a new imperialist war while voicing approval of opposition to it, not to mention those who deny that such a war is impending, are typical opportunists.

V. The Struggle Against Two Types of Deviation (Conclusion)

If the Communist Party is to carry out the above tasks successfully, it must be a political unit that is genuinely armed with Marxism-Leninism and that has iron rules. The party must always examine the results of its own activities with bolshevik self-criticism. The party must struggle decisively against any tendency that deviates from the principles of Marxism-Leninism—whether it is extreme-leftist sectarianism or right-wing opportunism. Our party’s strictness about its own activity is a necessary and indispensable condition for the victory of the Japanese proletariat.

Since the April 16th incident, we have committed a number of errors of extreme-leftist sectarianism. These endangered the ties between the working masses and the party. They were opportunistic, petty bourgeois practices couched in revolutionary language. Now, under the leadership of the Comintern, the international directorate, we have taken a vigorous step toward remedying our mistakes. But we have not completely corrected them. In the meantime, in one sector of our camp—though it is only a small

sector—right-wing tendencies are appearing (such as negativism toward mass struggle organizations). Only when our Japanese Communist Party conducts decisive and thorough struggles against these two types of deviation can it become a genuine bolshevik mass party and carry out the historical task of the Japanese proletariat as part of the international proletariat.

Theses on the Situation in Japan and the Tasks of the Communist Party, May 1932

I. Japanese Imperialism and War

The war of plunder that has been begun by Japanese imperialism is dragging the world into a new historic crisis—the greatest since the end of the World War. The seizure of Manchuria, the bloody attack on Shanghai and other parts of China, together with the other military operations of the Japanese bandits, represent the first step in a military action by one of the biggest imperialist powers during the present world economic crisis. The imperialist war that has commenced reflects the depth of the general and economic crisis in the capitalist world, of the tremendous sharpening of all the contradictions of world imperialism. It opens up an era of new political upheavals of great importance. As the result of the latest clashes between China and Japan, an unusually complex international situation has arisen. Consequently, all sections of the Comintern and, above all, the Japanese revolutionary proletariat with its communist vanguard are faced with tasks of the greatest responsibility.

1. The present war of expansion is the result of all preceding stages of Japanese imperialism's development. Japanese imperialism, predatory by nature and of a particularly aggressive character, has relied on colonial exploitation and military plunder to accumulate capital and consolidate itself.

When Japan converted to capitalism, the victory of the monarchy, the reactionary semifeudal bureaucracy, and the landlords led Japan to struggle against her unequal status in relation to the imperialist powers (unequal treaties) by plundering neighboring weaker nations, and paved the way for the present imperialist brigandry. In 1895, Japanese imperialism grabbed Korea from China, annexed Formosa, and exacted indemnities of 350 million yen from China. Japanese imperialism took advantage of the crushing of the Boxer Rebellion to pursue its policy of plunder. Following the war of 1904, it took the leased territory of South Manchuria away from tsarist Russia, seized the South Manchurian Railroad, etc. Later it con-

The 1932 theses appeared in *International Press Correspondence*, May 26, 1932, pp. 466–72. The authors have edited the text of this document slightly, after consulting several Japanese versions. A convenient source for a Japanese translation is Ishido and Yamabe, *Kominterun Nihon ni Kansuru Teze Shu*, pp. 76–101.

verted Korea into a colony—an outpost from which it could penetrate far into the continent of Asia. Its expansion increased during the World War, particularly in 1915, when it presented the notorious 21 demands to China that aimed at reducing China to a Japanese colony. At the Washington Conference in 1922, Japanese imperialism, under the pressure of the U.S.A., was compelled to abandon many of these demands, e.g., to evacuate Shantung. But Japanese imperialism did not give up its plans; it was gathering its forces and awaiting an opportune moment to carry out its program of plunder.

The growing aggressiveness of bourgeois-landlord Japan has continually upset the plans and aspirations of other imperialist powers. The war that Japan has begun against China will sharpen these contradictions still further. The Pacific Ocean and particularly China, where the contradictions of world capitalism have become most entangled since the World War, are becoming areas of sharp clashes of interests among the imperialist bandits. From its very beginning, the war in China has released forces that make the threat of a new world war, the threat of direct military clashes or intensified war preparations for a clash between Japan and America and the other great imperialist powers (if not all of them), more real than ever before.

2. At the same time, an important aspect of international imperialism is the great effort the imperialist powers are making to form a united front for war against the U.S.S.R. There is a genuine danger of armed intervention by the world imperialists against the land of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The League of Nations is an instrument for this war. By means of war against the U.S.S.R., the international bourgeoisie and their social-democratic agents will try to destroy the struggle of the international proletariat for freedom, for a revolutionary way out of the crisis. The struggle of two systems—decaying and dying capitalism, on the one hand, and triumphant and growing socialism, on the other—is unfolding before the eyes of the workers of all countries. Against the background of the present severe world crisis, all the advantages of the Soviet system become particularly clear, especially the astounding advances of socialist construction. The industrialization of the country of the proletarian dictatorship is taking place at an unprecedented pace. Tremendous successes have been achieved in the socialization of agriculture—in widespread collectivization and the liquidation of the *kulaks* as a class. The construction of the foundations for a socialist economy is complete. The conditions have been created for the completion of the second five-year plan, which will fully ensure the establishment of a classless socialist society that will open up a new epoch in the history of mankind.

For the working classes of the capitalist countries, who especially in the present economic crisis are doomed to mass unemployment, indescribable

misery and ruthless exploitation, the U.S.S.R. serves as a clear example and proof of the need for a revolutionary way out of the crisis, for the overthrow of capitalism. However, the plans of the imperialists are calculated to destroy socialist construction, to strangle the U.S.S.R., and to exploit still more mercilessly the workers and peasants in all countries—that is, to strengthen the regime of economic and political slavery. Of special interest is the alliance of the two international policemen—imperialist France, the policeman of Europe, and imperialist Japan, the policeman of the East—who are acting as initiators of the drive against the Soviet Union.

By launching an attack in the Far East, Japanese imperialism is to make it possible for France and its vassals (e.g., Poland) to launch a simultaneous or subsequent attack on the U.S.S.R. from the West. It is these anti-Soviet plans that best account for the support given to Japan by the other imperialist powers and the League of Nations as a whole in her war of plunder against China. Great Britain is prepared to cooperate in the dismemberment of China, and so does not oppose Japan's seizure of Manchuria; this is partly a way of offsetting American imperialism, but chiefly a way of participating in the anti-Soviet front. The U.S.A. is trying to obtain complete domination over China and is therefore in open conflict with Japanese imperialism, though it has not yet taken active steps against Japan. It is waiting for Japan to become weakened by a long-drawn-out war, but at the same time it fears a rapprochement between England and Japan. However, like the other imperialist powers, the U.S.A. places its greatest hopes on Japanese imperialism becoming the vanguard in an anti-Soviet war.

3. Bourgeois-landlord Japan assumes the role of warmonger because of the very character of Japanese imperialism itself. The aggressiveness of monopolistic capitalism in Japan is reinforced by the military adventurism of absolutist military and feudal imperialism. "In Japan and (tsarist) Russia, the monopoly of military force, unlimited territory, or the convenience of plundering foreigners (e.g., China, etc.) partly replaces and partly supplements the monopoly of modern finance capital" (Lenin, 1916). Japanese imperialism tries to use its monopoly of military force to make a war against China the starting point for an attack on the U.S.S.R., to crush the Soviet movement in China, to make a large part—an even greater part—of China into its colony, to gain a sounder economic base, to seize the sources of raw material (particularly for military uses), to secure a foothold on the continent of Asia, and thus to prepare for new wars for the supremacy of the Pacific.

The military adventures of Japanese imperialism are closely connected to a sharp aggravation of all the internal contradictions of Japanese imperialism, which have been deepened by the severe economic crisis. Monop-

olistic capitalism in Japan is caught up in an intricate web of precapitalist relationships, which accounts for the relative economic weakness of Japanese imperialism and the exceptional sharpness of its internal contradictions. There are many remnants of feudalism in the country; for instance, the peasants are plundered in the manner of semi-serfs and the proletariat is exploited on a colonial level; these conditions, which limit the domestic market, have brought about a combined industrial and agrarian crisis, as well as an acute economic crisis in town and village of unprecedented proportions. The landlords and capitalists of Japan are attempting, by means of war in China, to find a way out of this crisis—to crush the growing revolutionary mass movement, to extend their colonial possessions, and to open up new sources for greater exploitation of the toiling masses of China.

4. The Japanese communists must understand the inseparable link between the aggressiveness of Japanese imperialism abroad and its policy at home, the inseparable connection between the bandit imperialist war in other countries for the enslavement of colonial peoples and reaction at home. Through this war, the Japanese imperialists are striving to preserve and strengthen the regime of the military-police monarchy—the regime of savage terror and violence against the workers—to strengthen the oppressive powers of the landlords, and to force an even lower standard of living on the masses. Inevitably the war will greatly sharpen the class contradictions in Japan. It becomes the task of the Japanese proletariat and the Communist Party to combine the struggle against war with the struggle of the workers, the peasants, and all the toilers against their economic and political enslavement in order to convert the imperialist war into civil war and overthrow the bourgeois-landlord monarchy. Revolution in Japan has not been postponed by the war of plunder, but, on the contrary, has been brought nearer. With the beginning of the war, it has become evident that in addition to the stubborn resistance and the self-sacrificing struggle of the Chinese people for the integrity and independence of China, a protest movement against the imperialist war has begun both in the Japanese army and in the country. This indicates the possibility of a major failure in the adventurist plans of Japanese imperialism. Under such circumstances, the Communist Party of Japan is called on to play a very important role. The course of future events and the subsequent development of the revolutionary movement are wholly conditional on the strength, the solidarity of the Communist Party, on its ability to mobilize the millions of workers around its slogans and to lead their struggle. For this reason, the question of the ideological and organizational strengthening of the Communist Party of Japan is of primary importance. Present conditions make it imperative that the Communist Party bend every effort toward extending and strengthening its present weak contacts with the broad

masses of workers, peasants, and other toilers. At all costs, the party must stop lagging behind the increasingly active masses and become a genuine mass party, marching confidently to meet the coming revolution.

II. The Nature of the Coming Revolution

5. The Communist Party of Japan must have a clear understanding of the relationships of class forces in the country, as well as the character and tasks of the coming revolution in Japan. It must eliminate the mistaken theories that exist in its ranks on these extremely important questions. The present relationship of class forces, the character and the tasks of the coming revolution in Japan cannot be properly judged without analysis and without taking into consideration the peculiarities of the ruling system in Japan, which is a combination of very strong elements of feudalism with an advanced development of monopolistic capitalism.

(1) The starting point from which to judge the concrete situation in Japan is the character and role of the monarchy.

The absolute monarchy that was formed in Japan after 1868 has maintained its full power in spite of all changes of policy, and has constantly increased its bureaucratic apparatus for oppression of the working masses. It is based chiefly on the feudal parasitic class of landlords and on a rapacious bourgeoisie that is rapidly becoming wealthy. It has formed a close bloc with the upper ranks of these classes and has generally represented their interests. At the same time it has maintained its independence, its relatively significant role, and its absolute character, thinly concealed by pseudo-constitutional forms. In order to protect its power and income, the monarchist bureaucracy has exerted every effort to maintain the most reactionary police regime and to preserve all of the most barbarous aspects of the economic and political life of the country. The monarchy is the main pillar of political reaction and of all the relics of feudalism in the country. The monarchist state apparatus is the backbone of the present dictatorship of the exploiting classes, and its destruction must be considered the first of the fundamental tasks of the revolution in Japan.

The Communist Party of Japan has underestimated the role of the monarchy and considered it apart from bourgeois state forms "independent of the monarchy" like parliament and the party cabinet. This idea is completely incorrect. The extension of election rights for the male population, which was carried out in 1925 from above under the pressure of a popular movement, was a political bargain between the monarchy on the one hand and the landlords and imperialist bourgeoisie on the other—a bargain that was calculated to strengthen the monarchist bourgeois-landlord regime for the exploitation and suppression of the workers and peasants, to trick the people by increasing their parliamentary illusions, and to bring about a closer unity between the monarchist bureaucracy and the bour-

geoisie under the new circumstances of the rule of decaying monopolist capitalism. This unity took the form of an increased number of voters, a party cabinet of ministers, and a greater role for the financial oligarchy in the government without any limitation on absolutism or any restriction of the rights and powers of the monarchist bureaucracy.

The war further increases the role of the bureaucracy and especially its most aggressive and reactionary part—the military. Consequently, the role of the military leaders in the government has increased, bringing intervention against the U.S.S.R. still nearer and reinforcing police terror and violence against the Japanese workers and peasants. It is not correct to study the military apart from the bourgeois-landlord monarchy, and it is particularly dangerous to divert the mass struggle against the monarchy toward a struggle against the threat of a fascist coup that is allegedly approaching.

A few historical peculiarities must not be allowed to obscure the all-important fact that the absolutist regime in Japan is a form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the landlords over the workers every bit as oppressive as fascism in other countries. The party must expose the maneuvers of the ruling classes and the social democrats that are designed to cloak the monarchist regime and the growing reaction behind the bogey of a fascist menace, and thus to preserve and strengthen the dying monarchist illusions of the masses and divert them from the struggle against the chief enemy under present conditions—the bourgeois-landlord monarchy.

(2) The second of the main component parts of the ruling system of Japan is landlordism—this backward, Asiatic, semifeudal system in the Japanese villages that hinders the development of productive forces, increases the degradation of agriculture, and pauperizes the peasant masses. The Japanese landlords, as a rule, do not cultivate the land directly, but the landlord class owns over 40 per cent of the best land in Japan. The regime of exploitation and oppression of the peasants in industrially developed Japan resembles that in the most backward colonial country. The tenant has to hand over 50 to 60 per cent of his harvest simply for the right to use the land. To this oppression by the landlords is added the monstrous oppression of finance capital—mortgages and the monopolistic prices of the trusts.

There is no possibility that the ruling classes of Japan will make any fundamental alteration in the feudal basis of the agrarian system of the country. The agrarian revolution must be considered one of the fundamental tasks of the Japanese revolution; a determined effort must be made to eliminate any tendency to underestimate this task.

(3) The third of the basic elements of the ruling system of Japan is predatory monopolist capitalism. The centralization of capital in the hands of a small group of financial magnates was greatly assisted during the last imperialist war by feverish profiteering. The capitalist concerns monopolized a large part of the national wealth of the country. Bank capital and indus-

trial capital amalgamated, taking the form of huge vertical combines. The biggest of these—Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Yasuda, etc.—gained dominance in the capitalist economy of the country. The financial oligarchy became closely interwoven with the whole bureaucratic monarchical system, which carries out its policy.

The Japanese bourgeoisie increased and grew wealthy through the intense exploitation of the Japanese workers, the continuous plundering of the peasants, the seizure of military loot, the appropriation of state funds, and the plundering of colonial peoples. Japanese capitalism developed under conditions of military and police reaction and on the basis of feudal remnants in the country. The economy is characterized by the predominance of light industry, particularly the textile industry, while metallurgy and particularly machine construction are comparatively weak. Having attained a high level of development, Japanese capitalism was and continues to be reactionary and monarchist. This is mainly reflected in the fact that the Japanese working class, whose efficiency is as high as that of the Europeans, is still on the level of workers in colonial countries; their wages are equally low and their working day as long. A widespread system of barracks slavery exists for textile workers, miners, etc. Indentured labor is used on a large scale, and there is barbarous exploitation of child labor. There are no social laws. The workers of Japan have no economic or political rights. Finance capital systematically and widely uses the relics of feudalism—home industry, small handicraft production—in order to maintain its particularly severe exploitation of the working class.

6. The above analysis shows that all of the political and economic circumstances in the country point to the revolutionary movement first conducting a struggle against imperialist war, against the police and monarchist regime, against the colonial standard of living of the workers and their lack of political rights, and against the landlords and moneylending capitalists in the villages.

The Communist Party must make its basic task the attainment of socialism and must clearly understand that the path to the dictatorship of the proletariat in present Japanese conditions can only be through a bourgeois-democratic revolution, i.e., through the overthrow of the monarchy, the expropriation of the landlords, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants. The dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants and the transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution will take the form of powerful soviets of soldiers', workers', and peasants' deputies.

Consequently, the main tasks of the coming phase of the revolution are:

- (1) The overthrow of the monarchy.
- (2) The abolition of parasitic landlordism.
- (3) The establishment of a seven-hour day, and—in the conditions of

a revolutionary situation—the fusion of all banks into one national bank and the control of this bank, as well as the large capitalist enterprises, particularly the combines and trusts, by soviets of workers', peasants', and soldiers' deputies.

These tasks determine the character of the forthcoming revolution in Japan as a bourgeois-democratic revolution with a tendency to grow rapidly into a socialist revolution.

At the present time the chief slogans of action must be:

- (1) Opposition to imperialist war and conversion of imperialist war into civil war.
- (2) Overthrow of the bourgeois-landlord monarchy and establishment of a workers' and peasants' soviet government.
- (3) Confiscation without compensation of the land of all landlords, the emperor, and the churches for the peasants. Cancellation of all peasants' debts to the landlords, moneylenders, and banks.
- (4) Institution of a seven-hour day and a radical improvement in the conditions of the workers. Freedom of organization and action for class trade unions.
- (5) Liberation of the colonies (Korea, Manchuria, Formosa, etc.) from the yoke of Japanese imperialism.
- (6) Defense of the U.S.S.R. and the Chinese revolution.

In the struggle for these slogans, the Communist Party can and must rally all the revolutionary-democratic forces of Japan, i.e., the workers, peasants, and the urban poor. Therefore the central rallying cry of the Communist Party must be:

People's revolution against imperialist war and the police monarchy for rice, land, freedom, and the workers' and peasants' government!

The Communist Party must closely link the struggle for the workers' and peasants' soviet republic with systematic propaganda about socialism, widely publicizing the successes of the U.S.S.R. for this purpose.

The capitalist way out of the crisis—a further lowering of the standard of living of the workers and the ruin of the peasants through foreign military adventures and increased political reaction inside the country—must be opposed by the Communist Party. There must be widespread agitation and a mass struggle for a revolutionary way out of the crisis through the achievement of power by the workers and peasants, the abolition of landed estates, a radical improvement in the life of the workers, a series of measures transitional to socialism carried out under the conditions of a revolutionary situation, the amalgamation of the banks, and the introduction of control by the soviets of workers', peasants', and soldiers' deputies over the banks and the big factories of the capitalists, above all, over combines and trusts.

The revolution in Japan may tremendously accelerate and assist the victory of the international proletarian revolution, especially the victory of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution in the Eastern countries near to Japan (China, Korea, India, etc.). The economic and political brotherhood of Soviet Japan with countries where the proletariat has been victorious will ensure the complete success of socialist development in Japan and in the East, in general. The party must systematically contrast the prospect of a prosperous socialist Japan in close alliance with the liberated peoples of the East with the bourgeois and social democratic propaganda of a military and imperialist way out of the crisis.

7. The main driving force of the revolution is the proletariat and the poor and middle peasants.

It is not correct to say that the middle peasants are incapable of a revolutionary struggle against the landlords and the police monarchy. Ignoring the revolutionary potential of the middle peasants and toiling fishermen may lead to a rupture between the workers and peasants and is extremely dangerous for the revolutionary movement. The *kulaks* (the village bourgeoisie) are on the side of the existing regime, since they participate in moneylending and take advantage of land shortages and the lack of rights of the peasant masses. It is not correct to advocate confiscating only the land of the big landlords. Failure to demand the confiscation of the land of all the parasites of the landlords is even more mistaken, because at present the majority of peasant conflicts are with the middle and small landlords. Vacillation on this point will isolate the Communist Party from the rapidly developing struggle of the peasants.

Two blocs are at war in Japan—the allied workers and peasants against the allied landlords and bourgeoisie. At the present stage the workers' and peasants' revolution in Japan is directed chiefly against the bourgeois-landlord monarchy and the bourgeoisie. The successful development of the revolution can take place only if there is a close alliance of workers and peasants under the hegemony of the proletariat. The victory of the revolution is conditional upon the winning and consolidation of hegemony for the proletariat. The workers' and peasants' revolution in Japan can be successful only if, in addition to overthrowing the military-police, bureaucratic monarchy, it removes all the exploiting classes (including the bourgeoisie) from political power, both national and local.

8. The workers' and peasants' revolution can win only when it achieves the power of the workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies.

The imperative task of the communists during a revolutionary revolt is to form soviets of workers', peasants', and soldiers' deputies everywhere, especially at the moment of the overthrow of the monarchy. The task of the soviets is to fight for the complete destruction of the government apparatus of the bourgeois-landlord dictatorship (the disarming of the police, the

military police, and the officers of the army and the navy, the arming of the workers and peasants, the formation of a proletarian red guard, the dispersal of parliament, and the formation of central and local organs of government officials elected by the workers and peasants, etc.).

Only the revolutionary replacement of the whole state apparatus of the bourgeois-landlord reactionaries by the soviets and the Communist Party's achievement of the leading role in them will prevent the Japanese bourgeoisie, especially its leftist social-democratic wing (e.g., the All-Japan Labor-Farmer Masses Party), from limiting the revolutionary revolt at the moment of revolutionary mass—and to a great extent spontaneous—action by making concessions in outward forms of government (declaring a bourgeois republic) while preserving the basis of the bourgeois-landlord dictatorship—the police-bureaucratic apparatus for the oppression and enslavement of the people.

After the overthrow of the monarchy by the victorious people's revolution, the main task of the Communist Party will be the struggle for the rapid development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist revolution. Only the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat will guarantee the completion of the bourgeois-democratic tasks (e.g., the confiscation of the land of the landlords). In Japan, where the objective conditions for socialism exist and the necessity for the destruction of the capitalist system of exploitation has become fully developed, the formation and strengthening of the power of the soviets during the workers' and peasants' revolution and the winning of the leading role of the communists in them is a necessary and sufficient condition to pass on to the dictatorship of the proletariat, to pass on to a power that will guarantee the achievement of the fundamental aim of the proletariat—the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the construction of socialism.

III. The Present State of the Revolutionary Movement and the Immediate Tasks of the Party

9. Under conditions of the deepening economic crisis, war, and an increasing attack of the capitalists and landlords against the workers and peasants, the economic struggle of the proletariat and the struggle of the peasants against the landlords are intensifying.

The workers' movement in Japan has reached a turning point in its development: from a disorganized defensive struggle it is turning to mass revolutionary actions. The radicalization of the masses is accelerating. The strike movement is growing steadily. It has spread to all branches of industry. The majority of the proletariat have been drawn into the strike struggle, and the activity of the most disadvantaged workers is growing (increase of textile strikes). The strike struggle is taking on a more distinct

class character. Strikes are becoming increasingly difficult to settle and long-drawn-out, the number of recurring strikes is increasing, and the level of the demands is rising. Up to 1929, strikes rarely went beyond legal limits, but now they are more and more frequently turning into fierce street fights against the police; they show the fighting revolutionary thrust of the movement, which testifies to the attempts of the Japanese proletariat to pass on to a counterattack against the capitalists and the police regime that suppresses and hinders the struggle of the working class for its vital interests.

Previously the majority of conflicts in the villages took peaceful, legal forms and usually ended with arbitration or a court decision, but now revolutionary clashes between the peasants and the landlords are rapidly increasing everywhere. There are more cases of the burning of houses and property of landlords and of the destruction of courts and police institutions (e.g., Tochigi-Niigata). In some places the discontent of the peasants and fishermen takes the form of spontaneous revolts against the local government (Chiba, Toyama, etc.).

The popularity of the slogans "Land to the Peasants" and "The Alliance of Workers and Peasants" is growing. The concept of an alliance of workers and peasants is beginning to be put into practice in the mass movement. There are increasing numbers of cases in which peasants' movements are headed by city workers and cases in which the peasants help the striking workers.

The changes that are taking place in the masses are also reflected in the fact that the patriotism and loyalty to the monarch cultivated by the ruling classes, which until now have been one of the chief means of dulling the class consciousness of the masses, are disappearing. This is especially evident in the unprecedented cases of protest against the coronation celebrations and the cases in which crowds of peasants destroyed shrines with "holy" pictures of the Mikado. The old paternalist traditions and the entire patriarchal system are rapidly fading away. Antimonarchist revolutionary feelings are spreading into the army and navy, among the students, etc.

The correct position the Communist Party has taken toward the war has already had some obvious, though weak, effects, as reflected in the actions of various groups of advanced workers, peasants, soldiers, and students against war (e.g., antiwar demonstrations in Tokyo on October 17 with the participation of 1,500 workers, demonstrations in a number of towns on November 7, repeated antiwar demonstrations of thousands of students, peasant antiwar meetings in the prefecture of Toyama, etc., and unrest among the soldiers and the formation of revolutionary groups in some military units, such as the telegraph corps, the Himeji Division, and troops in occupied areas).

Revolutionary changes are taking place among the masses at the turning

point of the development of the class struggle in the country, when, as the internal and external contradictions of Japanese imperialism are multiplying and sharpening rapidly, the influence of the bourgeoisie on the proletariat, which in the past was unusually strong, is beginning to disappear on a large scale. A swing of the masses to the left is taking place under the heavy pressure of the white terror and the unbridled tyranny of the police. On the whole, it is spontaneous; the role of the Communist Party is extremely weak in the mass movement and social democrats of all kinds are strongly opposing the party.

The depth of the discontent of the masses has not yet been shown. The social fascists, especially their left wing (the All-Japan Labor-Farmer Masses Party, the dissolutionists, the police spies), continue to lead strikes and peasant conflicts only to betray them.

10. The policy of the bourgeois-landlord dictatorship is carried out with the assistance of the social democrats, who have formed an alliance with the police, thereby arming the bourgeoisie with leftist-democratic phraseology combined with police clubs, Mausers, and poison gases. Acting under the flag of "unity" of the labor movement, the social democrats are in fact splitting the masses. By unity of the workers they mean "workers' clubs," which are associations of the upper trade union bureaucrats against the workers—against the left-wing trade unions and the communists. They divide the united front from below against the employers; they keep the working class split into hundreds of small trade unions. The venal social democratic labor leaders and the leaders of the yellow trade unions maintain this disorganization to shamelessly sell out the working class and betray its struggle for its vital needs. The more radical the public statements of the social democrats, especially the leftists, the more base becomes the role of the social traitors in the workers' conflicts, where they act as the organizers of compulsory police arbitration—the organizers of strikebreaking—selling out the workers to the capitalists for bribes, actively supporting capitalist rationalization as well as mass firing of workers, and betraying the activists to the police.

Japanese social democrats of every persuasion have adopted the imperialist position in the war. They are completely with the organizers of the war against the Chinese people and the U.S.S.R. and are the most active agitators for that war (chauvinist agitation against the U.S.S.R., designation of intervention in China as a "national" and "socialist" war, patriotic demonstrations, particularly under the slogan "Down with Currency Speculators: Use Speculators' Profits to Carry On the War and for the Soldiers at the Front," collection of money from workers for the war, etc.).

The social democrats and the leaders of the reformist trade unions are the chief danger for the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants. The most dangerous are the leftist social democrats (All-Japan

Labor-Farmer Masses Party and the Ronoha) who use revolutionary phraseology, including theoretical discussions of the proletarian revolution (Inomata, Yamakawa, etc.), in order to hide their treacherous role in the war and the workers' movement, their subservience to the monarchy, and their faithful service to Japanese imperialism.

11. The circumstances in Japan are favorable for the communists to draw great masses of workers, peasants, and the urban poor into the revolutionary movement and to radicalize them rapidly through struggle by developing all the mass forms of struggle and protest that are possible at the present stage—mass strikes, peasant activity, mass demonstrations, etc.

As a result, big revolutionary events may take place in the near future. Many facts already point to the possibility of spontaneous mass protests and struggles in the near future. These spontaneous actions may easily be diverted from the revolutionary line if the Communist Party does not point out to the masses the causes of their misery and who is responsible for them, if it does not expose the true character and aims of the present war, if it does not systematically expose the policy of the government and the ruling classes and every step they take throughout the country, if it does not weaken the influence of the social fascists and become the leader of the day-to-day struggle of the masses, and if it does not show the masses the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

12. The tasks of the party in the struggle against war are:

- (1) Continuous spoken and written agitation and propaganda against the imperialist and counterrevolutionary war. Exposure of the war's predatory character and the role of the social democratic and reformist trade union leaders in the war.
- (2) Exposure of the counterrevolutionary imperialist and antinational significance of the war slogans of the ruling classes and the social democrats—"National Interests," "Protection of the Life and Property of Japanese Subjects," "Defense of Prestige of the Japanese Empire," etc., and unrelenting exposure of the provocative reports of "the red imperialism of the U.S.S.R."
- (3) A resolute struggle against the policy of the bourgeois-landlord monarchy and the social democrats to bring class peace to the country. Stubborn and painstaking efforts to overcome the chauvinist intoxication of the masses and untiring attempts to point out the misery and suffering the war will bring to the masses.
- (4) Widespread propaganda concerning the successes of socialist construction, the achievements of the workers and peasants in the U.S.S.R., and the peaceful policy of the Soviet Union. Propaganda concerning the successes and aims of the soviet movement in China.
- (5) The Communist Party of Japan must be guided by the aim of converting imperialist war into civil war, and must put forward slo-

gans and carry on an antiwar struggle appropriate to the nature of that war. The concept of fraternity—imperative in an imperialist war—must, under the conditions of the war of imperialist Japan against the Chinese people, be linked to a demand for the immediate recall of troops from China and to appeals to the Japanese soldiers to refuse to fight, to leave the front without giving up their weapons, and to form soldiers' committees. In the event of a counterrevolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. and revolutionary Soviet China, the concept of fraternity must be linked to agitation for the soldiers to desert to the side of the Red Army.

- (6) In a reactionary war, the revolutionary class cannot help hoping for the defeat of its own government. The defeat of Japan's army will weaken the monarchist government of Japan and advance the civil war against the ruling classes. In the current war of Japanese imperialism for the colonial enslavement of China, the slogan of action for the Japanese Communists must be: "A Struggle for the Complete Independence of China." Under conditions of imperialist war against China or the U.S.S.R., the Japanese Communists must not only be defeatists but fight most actively for the victory of the U.S.S.R. and the liberation of the Chinese people.
- (7) Every means must be used to instigate strikes in the railroad, maritime, and armament industries. Mass actions and revolutionary antiwar movements must be energetically developed, with a view to bringing about a general strike and converting it into an armed rebellion.
- (8) In order to mobilize the widest possible numbers in the struggle against war, the party must give special attention to young people, war invalids, and women, especially the wives and mothers of soldiers.
- (9) The communists must support the minimum demands of soldiers and sailors, such as improvement of their physical situation, better treatment, family allowances, increased leave, election of commanders, formation of soldiers' committees, political rights, etc. The communists must show suitable concern for the discontent of the soldiers and help them in their conflicts with officers. Efforts must be made to dissolve the mass nationalistic organizations of reservists, youth, etc.

13. The Japanese communists must understand that the main focus for the struggle against war lies in the mass movement, in the mass struggle. It is only by working among the masses in the factories and military units, in the trade unions and the villages, that imperialist war can be converted into civil war. The success of the mass struggle against war is wholly dependent upon the extent to which the Communist Party of Japan works

for the urgent demands of the masses of workers and peasants, takes over the leadership of strikes and peasant struggles, and wins the confidence of the masses by its revolutionary activity. The extension of the struggle for the urgent demands of the masses, closely tied to the struggle against war and the monarchy, must be at the basis of all party activity. The conduct of this struggle will enable the Communist Party of Japan to train its members for the leadership of the big revolutionary events that are approaching.

The immediate tasks of the party are:

- (1) General strengthening of the Communist Party and increased contact with the workers.
- (2) Development of the economic struggle of the proletariat for the urgent demands of the workers, the unemployed, and the salaried workers on the basis of the united front from below; winning of leadership of this struggle from the social traitors and leaders of the yellow trade unions; and strengthening of the revolutionary trade union movement.
- (3) Incitement and organization of the peasant struggle against the landlords.
- (4) Leadership of all expressions of discontent, protest, and struggle of the masses of the people and channeling of these movements into a political struggle against war and the ruling monarchy.

14. The Communist Party has begun to work among the masses, but the contacts of the communists with the masses and their role in the mass movement are still unpardonably weak. A radical change must take place and the day-to-day struggle of the workers, peasants, and soldiers must be led by the party. The party can bring about this change only if it frees itself once and for all of the remnants of sectarianism and opportunist passivity in practical mass work and establishes unbreakable ties with the working masses. The fundamental basis of contacts between the party and the masses must be systematic personal contact between individual communists and nonparty workers. All of the existing party forces should be employed in forming strong party committees and the largest possible number of cells in factories, especially in big factories. Finally, resolute recruiting work must be carried on among workers who have been tested in the struggle. It is necessary to fight against the fear of adding workers to the party: this is a dangerous symptom of opportunism. Workers must be promoted to leading posts in all party and mass organizations. Farm laborers and poor peasants must be recruited into the party, and party cells formed in villages.

The party must carry on an uncompromising struggle against all manifestations of rightist and leftist opportunism in its own ranks. The bolshevization of the party that is now in process and increasing will be met

by an activization and sharpening of opportunism against the party, still concealed to a large extent. In the present prerevolutionary period, the chief danger inside the party is right-wing opportunism. The most obvious recent manifestations of this opportunism have been the instances of the collection of money for the war under the pretext of maintaining contact with the masses, the attempts to hide work connected with the defense of the U.S.S.R. on the grounds that the masses are not yet mature enough to understand it, etc. Left-wing opportunist mistakes include the tendency to abandon the struggle for freedom of speech, the press, and assembly, and the right of workers to organize, and the tendency toward sectarianism in the leftist trade unions, which recently has been evidenced by the fact that party members, instead of recruiting and in every way drawing the workers into the trade unions, have demanded only recognition of the Red Labor Union International and other political principles.

It is necessary to learn to combine revolutionary illegal work with legal work in the spirit of the Communist Party among the broad masses and to take advantage of every legal possibility (every kind of open mass organization; the press; every activity by the workers, peasants, students, etc.; cultural and educational work, etc.) for the class education and organizational consolidation of the masses to increase their activity and intensify their struggle and for the achievement of communist leadership over all forms of the organization and struggle of the broad masses.

All communists must learn to win over the masses and organize them, to extend and deepen conflicts, to lead struggles, guided by the experience of the mass movement and the practice and lessons of individual strikes, to lead peasant conflicts, student uprisings, etc. If they do not learn these lessons, there will be a continuation of the present condition, in which everyone knows the correct tasks—for instance, “To the Masses in the Factories”—but does not fully carry them out.

Special attention should be paid to constantly improving the methods of conspiracy and to studying the reasons for successful police raids in order to take precautionary measures and especially in order to assure the continuity of the work of party organizations in case of future raids. At the same time, a ruthless struggle must be carried on against converting conspiracy into an aim in itself and against any other tendency likely to isolate the organization from the non-party workers. The language and content of the legal and illegal revolutionary press must be radically changed; they must be made interesting and intelligible to the rank and file among the workers and peasants.

15. The methods of party leadership in the trade unions and all other nonparty organizations must be completely changed. Dictatorial methods must be abandoned; these organizations should not have the same character as the party. Party leaders should limit themselves to achieving a lead-

ing role in these organizations through active participation and ideological influence and not rely on claims of party membership, etc. They should win over members to the side of revolutionary propositions by convincing them, and in no other way. To ensure a correct line of conduct of party members working in mass organizations, efficient communist fractions must be formed in the mass organizations, and party leadership and discipline over them improved.

The extremely damaging identification of the Communist Party with the leftist peasant unions was crudely demonstrated at the convention of the National Peasant Union (Zenno), when the communists fought the social democrats, not on the question of the struggle for land and against the monarchist regime, but on the question of "a legal or illegal party." At the present stage of the peasant movement, in addition to increasing the work in the peasant unions and recruiting the broad masses, especially the poor peasants, into them, it is necessary to agitate extensively for the formation of revolutionary peasant struggle committees and revolutionary self-defense units.

A trade union should be formed for the workers in the fishing industry, and active work should be conducted among the great numbers of toiling fishermen in Japan. A program of minimum demands should be worked out so that the party can lead the struggle of the small, working fishermen and win them over to the side of its revolutionary slogans.

The tremendous proportion of young people and women in the factories makes it necessary for the Communist Party to pay particular attention to the strengthening of the Communist Youth League and the overall improvement of party work among women.

16. A struggle to win over the masses must be conducted against social democrats of every persuasion. This struggle has not been successful in the past, mostly because it has not been concrete; either it has not been linked closely enough to the struggle of the masses for their vital needs and to the conduct of that struggle, or it has been abandoned in favor of calls for a physical struggle against individual social fascists. Neither failing has anything in common with the tasks of the Communist Party.

The essence of the struggle against social fascism consists of the struggle to free the masses from the influence of the social fascists. The fundamental task of the Communist Party and all of its organizations, of its press, and of each communist is to expose to the workers and peasants, day after day and in simple language, the treacherous and imperialist nature of social fascism—to tear off its mask of "friend of the people"—and so wrest the masses from its influence and win them over to the side of the Communist Party. It is necessary to expose the treachery of the social fascists, to deprive them of the confidence of the masses—not on the basis of abstract points, but on the basis of a practical, everyday struggle of the working class to

improve its material and political situation. Only on such a basis—only in close connection with the struggle for the concrete needs of the workers and peasants—can the bourgeois nature of social fascism on all questions of internal and international policy be exposed.

In the struggle against the ideology of social fascism, the party must concentrate on those manifestations that are the most dangerous for the revolutionary movement at a given time, those that have the most disastrous effect on the minds of the masses and hinder their activity—chauvinism, parliamentary illusions, etc.

17. The Communist Party of Japan must become the party of mass political action. For this purpose, all of its daily revolutionary practical work must be devoted to the task of initiating, organizing, and leading all expressions of discontent against the war and against the police-bureaucratic regime of the bourgeois-landlord monarchy. The Japanese Communists must take a stand on every political event, drawing a contrast between all the bourgeois-landlord parties or social traitors and its own revolutionary estimate of these events and its revolutionary reply to all questions that trouble the masses.

In drawing up its minimum political demands, the party must clearly understand that the Japanese parliament is an integral part of the present monarchist dictatorship. While fighting by every means for minimum political demands, including the fight against the existing restrictions for women and youth, the party must not under any circumstances advance any political demands that would direct the attention of the masses to the struggle for improving the parliamentary system and would sow parliamentary illusions among them. On the contrary, while making full use of parliamentary elections and parliamentary work, and where possible taking part in them for the purpose of revolutionary agitation, the Communist Party must direct its work toward dispelling the parliamentary illusions of the masses. It must completely abandon the incorrect slogan "Dissolving Parliament."

The program of minimum economic and political demands put forward by the Communist Party must be based above all on the nonparliamentary struggle against war, against the present police monarchist regime, against the capitalists and landlords—the struggle for the most pressing demands of the working class, the working peasants, and the urban poor.

18. The party must prepare a program of minimum demands that can be changed to suit the concrete political conditions of the moment, carefully taking into account all points that may assist in the rapid radicalization of the masses.

The action program of the Communist Party should include the above-mentioned antiwar demands as well as the following:

(1) An end to strikebreaking and interference in peasant activities by

the military and the police; the right to strike and freedom of the peasant struggle; unlimited freedom for trade unions, peasant unions, and all other organizations of the toilers; an end to arbitration and interference by the government—law courts, police, etc.—in the struggle of the workers against the capitalists and the landlords.

- (2) Immediate liberation of all victims of police violence and all political prisoners—trade union leaders, strikers, participants in peasant conflicts, members of the Communist Party, Korean and Chinese revolutionists.
- (3) Unlimited freedom of assembly, speech, and press for the workers; complete freedom for political meetings and demonstrations; formation and recognition of factory committees regardless of the formal structure of the factories; organization of proletarian self-defense.
- (4) Elimination of rent and cessation of the robbery of peasants by landlords and capitalists; cancellation of all peasants' debts to landlords, moneylenders, trusts, and banks; refusal to pay these debts or to pay taxes.
- (5) Repeal of all antiworker and antipeasant laws; genuine equal rights for the *eta* and for women.
- (6) An end to slavlike labor practices—servitude in barracks, indentured labor (a hidden form of slavery for workers and youths), the doubly intense exploitation of women, youth, Koreans, and Formosans; equal pay for equal work; criminal prosecution for open or concealed trafficking in women and children; etc.
- (7) Cessation of capitalist rationalization; institution of a seven-hour day for adults, a six-hour day for those 16 to 18 years old, and a four-hour day for everyone under 16; prohibition of child labor; a 40-hour week (but in small and medium industries, where the working day is particularly long, a 46-hour week at first). A day off each week with full pay and an annual two-week paid vacation.
- (8) A general wage increase and establishment of a minimum wage based on the cost of living of a worker's family; prohibition of deductions from wages; criminal prosecution for failure to pay wages on time.
- (9) Immediate introduction of government insurance programs against unemployment, sickness, accidents, and old age, to be financed by the employers; full control of the state insurance funds by the workers and the unemployed; reduction of house rents and electricity costs for workers, and complete exemption of the unemployed from such payments; formation of a tenant union for the struggle for lower rents.

- (10) Elimination of the program of economy and inflation carried out by the government at the expense of the workers; prevention of high prices; institution of an economy program based on cuts in the expenditure of huge amounts of public money for armaments, the police, subsidies to the capitalists and landlords, and large salaries for the emperor and the nobles. Heavy taxation of banks, corporations, and trusts. Confiscation of speculators' profits and transfer of these funds for the assistance of the unemployed and the poor in the towns and villages. Increased taxation of the rich and tax exemption for the workers, small peasants, poor handicraftsmen, and the urban poor.
- (11) Liberation of Korea, Formosa, Manchuria, and other districts annexed from China. Immediate withdrawal of Japanese forces from these countries. Defense of the U.S.S.R. and the Chinese people.

The entire struggle of the Communist Party for minimum demands must be directed toward winning over the working masses for the basic slogans of the revolution. By developing the struggle for minimum demands and winning the masses over to its side, the Communist Party will bring the outbreak of revolution nearer. War and crisis have intensified the class contradictions in the country. The mass revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants under the leadership of the Communist Party of Japan will lead to a revolutionary crisis in which the monarchy will be crushed; workers' and peasants' soviets will be formed, under whose flag the Communist Party of Japan will lead the working class and all the toilers to final victory.

A Letter to the Japanese Communists from Okano [Nosaka Sanzo]
and Tanaka [Yamamoto Kenzo], Moscow, February 1936

I.

Dear Comrades!

Our Communist Party aims at establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat after first completing a bourgeois-democratic revolution. This basic policy is the only correct policy, for a number of feudal remnants still exist in modern Japan. In our country there is the militarist-police imperial system and the parasitic, semifeudal system of landownership. Moreover, feudal remnants exist in labor-capital relations and permeate social life and family relations. The continued existence of the remnants of feudalism necessitates first struggling for the fulfillment of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. In other words, it is necessary to fight for such objectives as the overthrow of the imperial system, the establishment of a revolutionary, democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, the confiscation without compensation of the property of landlords, the distribution of land to the peasants, an eight-hour working day, and a radical improvement of the living conditions of workers and all other working people.

The struggle to develop the bourgeois-democratic revolution and advance toward a socialist revolution is in fact the only possible road to the dictatorship of the Japanese proletariat, the establishment of the soviet socialist system, and the abolition of the system of exploitation of man by man. It is the road to a life of comfort and culture for all members of society.

Although our party is advancing according to these correct strategic policies, it has not yet succeeded in *mobilizing the masses in struggles for their immediate interests and in approaching them in a way that would lead them to struggle for the fundamental tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution*. Instead of using mass methods, we have tended to fall into the error of sectarianism by *contenting ourselves with theory and mere propagation of the fundamental slogans of the revolution*. In this regard, we have failed to take into consideration the fact that the broad masses are not yet prepared to conduct an open struggle against the imperial system;

The authors' translation of this document is based on a text in Ishido and Yamabe, *Kominterun Nihon ni Kansuru Teze Shu*, pp. 205-17.

we have failed to realize that the broad masses have not yet completely rid themselves of chauvinistic prejudices and their delusions about the imperial system. The masses can overcome these delusions only through their own experiences in the political struggle.

In accordance with the resolutions of the Seventh Congress of the Comintern and its analysis of the present international situation, we must correct this tactical policy and make it more specific.

First, it is essential to make clear what *the greatest danger* for the working class is, what its sources are, and against *what enemy* the working class should and can develop a broad mass struggle. Our political slogans must stimulate the masses to rise against *the present major enemy*.

Now, it is quite clear that *the fascist military is the major enemy against whom we must wage war*. The military includes the most reactionary and barbaric imperialists within the structure of the imperial system. The military has used aggressive action in China over the past four years to expand its power (at times almost dictatorial), to deliver the final attack against the last vestiges of freedom and civil rights, and to punish even supporters of the emperor like Dr. Minobe. The military has increased military expenditures to an unprecedented level, dissipated the national wealth, and reduced the masses to great misery.

The misery of the people does not seem to concern these war maniacs. Their representatives declare that there is no need to consider natural economic resources or the danger of economic ruin in their accelerating preparations for a new "Great War" that is their "Heavenly Mission," and that, to this end, they are ready to reduce Japan to a "scorched land." The fascist militarists are leading our country to fascist barbarism and economic as well as military devastation, and are turning our people into cannon fodder in the international counterrevolution.

The military, particularly its extreme elements, is not satisfied with our present reactionary government and is anxious to establish an overt military-fascist dictatorship. It is industriously destroying the legal organizations of workers and peasants and banning all parties except fascist ones, thereby transforming all our working people into obedient slaves of the exploiters—slaves who have no right to voice a word of protest against the military assassins and who are forced to submit blindly to any plunder, any exploitation, any outrage.

The fact that Japanese fascism does not have its own mass political party hardly decreases the dangerous nature of the fascists. The imperial system, especially the power that the military has in state affairs, makes it possible for Japanese fascism to triumph through the dictatorship of military fascists. The military has dictatorial control over the army and the navy and will expand its influence not only among the exploiting classes but among the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie in the cities and farm villages.

Penetrating the workers, it has succeeded in winning over a number of labor unions. The present reactionary government, despite some differences of opinion with the aggressive fascist elements in the military, is paving the way for a dictatorship of the military fascists.

It is therefore a great mistake to underestimate the danger of a military-fascist dictatorship. The struggles of the working masses must be directed against this menace and against the domestic and foreign policies of the military. These struggles are closely related to the struggles against finance capital and the landlords, because the fascist military represents the interests of the most reactionary elements among the capitalists and the parasitic landlords. The struggle against the reactionary policies of the government is therefore not simply a struggle for the fundamental rights of the broad masses but one of the most important tasks in the struggle against the fascist peril.

Conditions are becoming favorable for the start of a great national movement in Japan against the menace of a military-fascist dictatorship. An anti-fascist movement is developing in the working class, whose power is increasing. The power of the military is declining. The discontent of the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie and their cry for relief are aggravated by and increasingly directed against military expenditures. Among all the people, especially the working and intellectual classes, protest against the suppression of freedom by the military is increasing.

The increasing discontent of the masses and the military's machinations for more adventurous policies and supreme power are aggravating the conflicts within the camp of the ruling classes. The Seiyukai, which is a party of the bourgeoisie, is increasing its support of the military's policies, whereas the Minseito, another bourgeois, reactionary party, by supporting the present government and advancing the slogan "Opposition to Fascism," seeks to use the growing antifascist sentiment of the masses to restrain the extreme elements in the military, and obtain from the military leadership a compromise acceptable to the bourgeoisie.

The antifascist struggle cannot be successful without fighting those parties and groups that are compromising and dealing with the military. The interests of the Japanese people require an all-out struggle against fascism and war. The only way to save our people from the horror of fascism and war is through a great national movement based on the united action of the working class and on an antifascist popular front. The present task of the Japanese Communist Party is therefore to unite all working people against the military, the reactionaries, and war. Our country is divided into two opposing camps. There is the camp of the fascist military, the financial cliques, and the landlords—the camp of dark reaction and military adventure—and there is the camp of the united front of working classes—the camp of democracy, peace, and work.

The most urgent targets for our party's policy and tactics and our present prospects have been outlined above. On the basis of these prospects, the movement, which has begun to initiate united action by the working class and establish a broad popular front, must be strengthened thoroughly. The party should take advantage of the fact that the concept of an alliance between the workers and peasants is spreading. The interests not only of tenant farmers but of all peasants are opposed to those of the landlords; the interests of small businessmen are opposed to those of the large industrial enterprises that enslave them; the interests of small merchants are opposed to those of the huge department stores; the interests of the working and intellectual classes are opposed to those of the corrupt bureaucrats and high government officials. And the working class has been enslaved by the capitalists. The workers, who already lack rights and are oppressed by the police, are threatened with even greater tyranny at the hands of the fascists and the military.

The workers, peasants, urban petty bourgeoisie, and intellectuals represent more than 90 per cent of our total population. Indeed, these people are our nation, not those privileged few who suppress and exploit them. Our party can and must become the leader of these working people.

The problem is whether there is to be a democratic Japan or a military-fascist dictatorship. The latter would draw Japan back into the darkness of military dictatorship like that under the Tokugawa Shogunate and lead her to military and economic ruin. Therefore, our main political slogans at this stage of the struggle—the slogans of the national movement—must include: "Opposition to Reaction and the Menace of Military-Fascist Dictatorship," "Establishment of a Democratic Japan with Power in the Hands of the People," and "Convocation of a People's Constitutional Assembly Elected by Universal, Equal, Direct, and Secret Vote of All Adults and Having Supreme Power!"

II.

1. Our party should conduct illegal as well as broad legal activities. It should strongly criticize the military as well as the reactionary parties and their representatives who cooperate with military fascism and war policies; at the same time it should advance slogans that are familiar to the masses of workers and peasants. For the present, the contents of these slogans should be substantially as follows:

- A. A struggle against reaction and the danger of military-fascist dictatorship.
- B. Divestment of the military of its power; expansion of freedom and popular rights; protection of human rights; freedom of strikes and tenants' disputes and opposition to their suppression; freedom of

- speech, press, assembly, and association; equal rights for both sexes; expansion of voting rights.
- C. Reduction of military expenditures and use of the money for the relief of the unemployed and the poor.
 - D. Enactment of an unemployment insurance law and abolition of the temporary-worker system. Guaranteed freedom of organization and activity of labor unions. An eight-hour working day. Institution of one paid holiday each week.
 - E. A moratorium on the debts of peasants, consumer cooperatives, small merchants, and salaried employees; extension of interest-free loans to them.
 - F. Enactment of a law that would prevent increases in tenant rents and eviction; distribution of the land to cultivators.
 - G. A policy of peace; immediate termination of the war against the Chinese people; immediate conclusion of a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union.

The legal and illegal political programs of the communists are the same in content but must be different in form. It is essential to use legal opportunities fully for the sake of the widest possible activity. Communists must be ready to conduct struggles on the legal scene. For example, the slogan "Opposition to Fascism" is now widely discussed and has not been banned. It is therefore possible and necessary to expose thoroughly the policies of the military by opposing fascism and Japanese chauvinist societies.

2. The demagogic lie of the ruling classes that communists are traitors who plan to act against the interests of the Japanese people must be crushed. The mask of "guardian of the people's well-being" must be stripped from the sycophants of the capitalists and the so-called "patriots in uniform" who are protecting the interests of a handful of exploiters in the name of patriotism. We must prove that only communists fight for the interests of all our working people. In the struggle against the fascist military, we must make use of the revolutionary circumstances of our history and the public's hatred of the Tokugawa Shogunate, for the military is trying to restore the repression and tyranny of the Tokugawa Shogunate in contemporary Japan.

III.

Our party will have the following tasks in the united action of the working class and in the struggle for the antifascist popular front:

1. The communists and their supporters must join the legal mass organizations of the working people—above all, labor unions and peasant unions. Along with these organizations they must join the Social Masses

Party. Within these organizations, they should strive to lead a majority of the members and the organization itself toward the class struggle and the left-wing current, and thereby establish an antifascist popular front of the proletariat, organized on the national and local levels. In addition, communists must fight in mass organizations like the Levelers' Society, industrial unions, peace organizations, youth corps, and veterans' associations in order to win over the masses of the members and the local branches to a popular front opposed to fascism, reaction, and war. While keeping close contact with the left-wing elements in the Social Masses Party, communists should fight against the party's reactionary leaders and strive to isolate them. In this connection, communists must strongly oppose attempts to withdraw left-wing local organizations from the Social Masses Party and other mass organizations or to organize a new proletarian party in opposition to the Social Masses Party. They must do everything they can to defend the legality and unity of labor unions, the Social Masses Party, and other labor organizations.

2. The policy of the left wing in the mass movement must be based on the protection of the immediate economic and political interests of the working class, peasants, and urban petty bourgeoisie. The economic struggles of the working masses must be tied to opposition to the military, to fascism, and to reactionary policies, as well as to the popular demand for democracy.

Our supreme duty is to start a broad national movement in opposition to all feudal systems and institutions—for instance, the trafficking in women and children, the slavelike boarding of hundreds of thousands of women spinners and mine workers, the concentration shacks for bondmen, the subcontract system for double exploitation, the temporary-worker system, and colonial low wages—and in opposition to the absence and disregard of the rights of workers.

To fight against all these systems of national disgrace is the duty of the whole working class and all faithful democrats. There are a variety of legal forms and methods to use in this struggle, including the most primitive one—mass protest. The most important thing at present is *not* that the struggle and the demands take the most radical form possible, but that *they be of such a nature as to arouse the concern of the broad masses and cause them to take united action.*

3. The communists are fighting for the unification of labor unions, which are currently highly fragmented, along industrial lines. It is especially important to develop a mass movement among the smaller affiliates of reformist labor unions for unification and merger with left-wing legal labor unions. In the struggle for labor union unification the supporters of the

class labor union movement should join such organizations of workers as the Konan Labor Council and, in districts where there is no such organization, they should work to form one. All members of illegal labor unions should join legal unions; communists must strive to persuade all workers to join legal labor unions.

We believe that, while the communists should maintain that all reformist and left-wing unions join a labor congress and all mass organizations join the Social Masses Party, they should fight to establish the organizational and political independence of all the affiliated mass organizations in the congress or the Social Masses Party and to obtain party democracy. They should launch a campaign to encourage the militant elements within Japanese labor unions that have quit the congress of unions to return. They should draw into the struggle against the military those elements of the working masses who have recently shown their opposition to shameless actions against the workers and manipulations to break up unions of civilian fascist organizations and leaders of nationalistic unions; the military is in fact the leader of such fascist organizations.

4. Communists must give the fullest support to the movement to reorganize the youth divisions of the Social Masses Party, labor unions, and peasant unions into a mass organization. Communist Youth League members must join these organizations and influence all young workers to join them. League members must become the most positive, most activist elements in these organizations and endeavor to see that their members support the policies of the left wing. A similar struggle must be carried out in the youth sections of industrial unions and other organizations.

We must penetrate the reactionary youth associations, particularly the Japan Youth Corps. The members of the lower echelons of these organizations are mostly young workingmen. A struggle must be carried out to expand our influence among these young men.

5. We need to revise our tactics in farm villages in order to make them more consistent with our party's policy for a bourgeois-democratic agrarian revolution.

It is correct to say that our principal supporters in farm villages are the rural proletariat and poor peasants, and that those peasants who oppose landlords are mostly tenants and semi-tenants. Yet despite the opinion of a certain comrade, it is not necessarily a contradiction to believe that a joint struggle involving all the farming population—not only tenants, semi-tenants but also a certain number of wealthy farmers and very small landlords—is possible in Japan. It is now possible and indeed necessary to form a front comprising the whole farming population in order to struggle against debts, heavy taxes, fertilizer and electricity charges, and other mo-

nopoly prices that enslave peasants, and to fight for prompt state relief for peasants suffering from hunger and destitution. Our task is to develop the class struggle of the rural proletariat—the struggle to reduce tenancy rents and prevent tenant dispossession, as well as the struggle for the general demands of the peasants. Our task is to oppose reaction and fascism and unite the broad masses of peasants into a single popular front that will fight for land, peace, and freedom.

It is of particular importance not to overlook even the simplest aspects of the whole rural movement—the petition campaign, for example. We must use every means to support and develop them into an active movement. Needless to say, it is necessary to organize a mass rally of peasants to discuss the petition, the authorities' reply to it, or the proceedings on the petition and committee discussions in the Diet. This can transform the peasants' passive petition campaign into an active mass movement. It is necessary to fight to prevent the leaders and others involved in the petition movement from falling into the hands of landlords and fascists. Furthermore, we believe that it is necessary to endeavor to achieve the unification of all anti-landlord peasant unions and the National Peasant Union (Zenno).

It is also important to set up various committees of peasants and tenant farmers for the purpose of day-to-day struggles. Even if these are not revolutionary committees at the outset, even if they are something like a petition committee at first, they can and must be made effective weapons to strengthen the activity and popularity of the peasant movement. It is clear that a committee that unites all tenant farmers in the struggle against their enslavement to landlords can play a very important role, regardless of the political views and affiliation with other rural organizations of its individual members. Our supporters should emphasize repeatedly that the peasant unions should not impede the creation of peasant committees or tenant committees but, on the contrary, should aid them and actively take part in their formation.

In order to intensify the tenant farmers' struggle, it is necessary first to organize the widely scattered, small-scale tenancy disputes into a large-scale movement and to win to the side of the struggle the broad masses of peasants who have no direct interest in the disputes. It is especially important to strive to create a committee of all peasants who support tenant disputes. At the present stage of the peasant movement, our activities against the parasitic landowner system must be conducted with particular ferocity against big landlords. However, when tenant farmers who cultivate the land of small landlords have a dispute, we must of course take their side against these landlords and support them.

We must join all types of organizations for peasants and their movement, and carry out the important major task of forming a united front among

urban and rural workers who are opposed to the danger of reaction and the dictatorship of military fascists. The working class and its organizations must not only give positive support to the demands of the peasants but also endeavor themselves to put up the important demands of workers and farmers.

6. With a view to winning over small merchants, small industrialists, and the intelligentsia as allies, the working class must advance and defend the urgent demands of the petty bourgeoisie and working intelligentsia and show that only when they advance along with the working class can they be saved from the violent assaults of big monopoly capitalism, from the heavy burden of debts and ruin, from unemployment in the case of professionals, from the violence of the fascists, and from the pressure exerted against culture and science.

The urgent demands of the urban petty bourgeoisie are: a moratorium on debts, low-interest loans without collateral, tax reduction for small tradesmen and industrialists, and opposition to low taxes for big capitalists and department stores. In this connection, the demand for state aid for small tradesmen and industrialists on the verge of bankruptcy must be linked to a movement demanding the curtailment of military expenditures. The demands of the working intelligentsia are: freedom for study, creative expression, and cultural activities; guaranteed employment for office workers, employees of city, town, and village governments, and professionals; salaries related to increased living costs; and freedom to organize labor unions and participate in political movements.

IV.

1. Our main task at present is to strengthen the Communist Party—ideologically, politically, and organizationally. Unless the party overcomes sectarianism in its ideological and political activities, it cannot move a single step forward, and the crisis existing within the party will be further aggravated. We must expose the false revolutionaries who disguise their sectarianism. We must understand and explain that sectarianism makes party activity passive, causes the party to abandon its struggles for the masses, and leads the party rank and file to corruption. At the same time, we must carry on the struggle against those who attempt to draw the party into the mud of right-wing opportunism or to the side of social democracy. While skillfully combining legal and illegal activities, the party must focus most of its activity on the legal scene, above all in labor unions, peasant unions, and proletarian mass parties, but also in such mass organizations as the Levelers' Society, company unions, youth corps, and industrial and veterans' associations.

2. A systematic survey of all party members must be made according to the nature of their daily work. Moreover, it would be helpful to study the legal activities of those who want to join the party over a period of time. New party members should be recruited and activists obtained from among non-party left-wing workers experienced in legal activities. However, it would be wiser not to admit them into the party until they take part in party work and demonstrate their reliability. After being admitted into the party, they must maintain their legal status and generally continue legal activities. All means must be used to train them systematically as party operatives who can work in the bolshevik manner both in illegal organizations and in legal movements. There are still some communists who underestimate the importance of maintaining their legal status, and we must fight determinedly against them.

3. The plan for reorganizing the structure of the party has been designed to give needed flexibility to the party's work. The approach is to link the organizational structure to work among the masses and to make it suitable for present political conditions so as to protect the party from the destruction of its organization by the police. For example, it is desirable that fractions be formed on the local level within legal mass organizations—labor and peasant unions, and their local affiliates—as well as proletarian mass parties, and that communists take advantage of their connections in such organizations to penetrate factories and strengthen their influence in them. In order to prevent or minimize the destruction of the party organization by the police, we should avoid extreme centralization in our organization and allow the lower echelons maximum freedom of action. At the same time it is desirable that the ideological and political leadership of the party as a whole be unified through a single central body and a central party newspaper.

Comrades! We sincerely hope that communists will discuss all the problems presented above and do their best to carry out fundamental reforms in their practical programs in the spirit of the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern.

Biographical Sketches

AKAMATSU KATSUMARO. Born in Tokuyama in Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1894, son of Buddhist priest (his grandfather was an influential religious leader, a high priest at the Nishi Honganji Temple in Kyoto; three of his brothers became university professors, one teaching Buddhism at Ryukoku University; a younger sister, Tsuneko, served as director of the women's department of Sodomei from 1934-40 and was active in the postwar socialist movement; and a younger brother, Iomaro, who studied with Kawakami Hajime at Kyoto Imperial University, was a leading member of Labor-Farmer Party); led student strike against school administration during third year at middle school in Tokuyama and was ordered to leave; continued education at higher school in Kyoto; gained admission to Tokyo Imperial University, where he studied law and politics under Yoshino Sakuzo; active in Universal Suffrage Study Society and in New Men Society; married Yoshino's daughter Akiko; graduated in 1919 and worked briefly as reporter for *The Oriental Economist*; worked from 1919 to 1924 in Sodomei's research department and served as an editor of *Emancipation*; member of First Japanese Communist Party but soon deserted it for social democratic movement; became chief of Sodomei's political bureau in January 1924 and played a key role in helping to draft "Change of Direction" declaration of February 1924; member of Society for the Study of Political Problems in 1923-24; ran for Diet as Social Democrat without success in 1928 and 1930; elected as secretary-general of Social Democratic Party in March 1930; became leader in national socialist movement after 1932, serving as official in both Japan State Socialist Party and Nationalist Society; elected to Diet in 1937 but was not returned in 1942; served as chief of organization section of planning bureau of Imperial Rule Assistance Association during war; purged after the war and did not return to politics; died in 1955.

AONO SUEKICHI. Born on Sado Island off Niigata in 1890; after completing middle school, taught in primary school in Niigata Prefecture for three years; graduated with degree in English literature from Waseda University in 1915 and took position with *Yomiuri Shinbun*; transferred in 1918 to *Taisho Nichinichi* and in 1919 to International Press Service, where Hira-

bayashi Hatsunosuke and Ichikawa Shoichi were employed; member of group, along with Hirabayashi and Ichikawa, that began publishing *The Proletariat* in 1922; active in literary world through journals like *The Sower* (*Tanemaku Hito*) and *Literary Arts Front*; member of First Japanese Communist Party, but escaped arrest in June 1923; member of communist bureau established in March 1924; regular contributor to *Marxism* and did much to popularize Lenin and his thought in this and other journals; participated in drafting of Shanghai Theses in January 1925, but shortly thereafter resigned from the communist bureau; opposed Fukumotoism and joined Ronoha under Yamakawa's leadership in December 1927; active in literary circles in 1930's; involved in "Popular Front Incident" of 1937 and arrested along with other Ronoha figures; defected later and was released from prison; joined staff of anti-Marxist *World of Literature* (*Bungakkai*); free-lance literary critic and lecturer at Waseda University after war; served for a time as editor of Japan Socialist Party's *Socialist Newspaper* (*Shakai Shinpo*); chairman of Japan Literary Men's Association; died in 1961.

ARAHATA KANSON. Born in 1887, son of teahouse proprietor in the Tanmachi pleasure district of Yokohama; after completing primary school in 1901, left home in opposition to his father's occupation; worked in foreign trading firm, at Yokosuka Naval Dockyard, and in bookstore; influenced by socialist thought through weekly *Commoners' News*, began in 1905 to distribute socialist literature in Chiba, Ibaraki, Saitama, Tochigi, and Fukushima prefectures; later in 1905 became reporter for *Muru Shinbun*, small local newspaper published at Tanabe in Wakayama Prefecture, and continued to propagate socialist ideas; married Kanno Sugako, whom he later lost to Kotoku Shusui; joined Sakai Toshihiko's group in Tokyo in 1906; imprisoned in 1908 for two years for participation in "Red Flag Incident"; joined with Osugi Sakai in 1912 to publish *Modern Thought* and later, in 1914, the monthly *Commoners' News*; joined with Yamakawa Hitoshi and Kondo Kenji in 1916 to publish *Blue Uniform*, and was sentenced with them to ten months in prison for violation of Press Law; like Sakai and Yamakawa, was converted from anarcho-syndicalism to Marxism-Leninism after Russian Revolution; founded Labor and Liberty Society in Osaka; one of the promoters of Socialist League, 1920-21; member of communist group organized in April 1921; member of executive committee of First Japanese Communist Party established in July 1922; attended Third Enlarged Plenum of Comintern executive committee in June 1923; with Tokuda Kyuichi, Nosaka Sanzo, Ichikawa Shoichi, and Sano Fumio, opposed dissolution of the Japanese Communist Party in February 1924; member of communist bureau established in March 1924; participated in drafting of Shanghai Theses in January 1925; became chief

representative of communist group in Kansai region in August 1925; served jail term in 1926–27 as result of June 1923 “Communist Party Incident”; after release from prison did not join Second Japanese Communist Party because of his opposition to Fukumotoism; joined Ronoha in December 1927; arrested in June 1928 and released on bail in March 1929; attempted suicide in September 1929 at hotel in Shinjuku ward of Tokyo; given two-year suspended jail sentence; associated with Kato Kanju in 1930’s and with other Ronoha members joined Japan Proletarian Party in February 1937; arrested and jailed in December 1937 in “Popular Front Incident”; active in socialist movement in postwar era, serving on the central executive committee of Japan Socialist Party, 1946–48, and as chairman of the party’s education committee in 1947 and labor committee in 1948; resigned from Japan Socialist Party in 1949; active also in labor movement; i.e., president of Kanto District Union of Metal Workers and labor representative on Central Labor Relations Committee in 1948; elected to Diet in 1946 and 1947, defeated in 1949.

FUJII TETSUO. Born in Okayama Prefecture in 1904; graduated from middle school in Himeji in Hyogo Prefecture; entered Fukuoka Seinan Gakuin (school) in 1923 (his mother, brother, and sister worked at the Tagawa Coal Mine near Fukuoka); became involved in peasant movement in May 1923 and then in labor movement; after leaving school in November 1923, was active in North Kyushu Machine Workers Union affiliated with Sodomei; participated in strike against Toho Power Generating Company, was arrested, and jailed with Otsuka Ryoichi for destroying equipment; participated in 1924 in second strike against same company and was sentenced to two-year jail term; upon release in September 1925 joined Hyogikai; active in North Kyushu Iron Workers Union and helped to throw its support behind Proletarian Youth League and Labor-Farmer Party; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and represented Kyushu region at Goshiki Conference in December 1926; became chairman in December 1927 of party’s Kyushu regional committee; arrested in March 1928 and subsequently sentenced to prison term.

FUKUMOTO KAZUO. Born in small village in Tottori Prefecture in July 1894, second son of moderately prosperous landlord; graduated from local middle school and attended First Higher School in Tokyo; studied politics in law department of Tokyo Imperial University; on graduation in 1920, entered government service and became junior official in Shimane Prefecture; became lecturer in law and economics in 1921 at new higher school in Matsue; ordered by Ministry of Education in 1922 to study abroad in field of law for two years; left Japan in March, stayed one month each in United States and England and then one year each in France and Ger-

many; became engrossed in Marxism, reading widely in Marx, Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, and others; joined German Communist Party; ordered home by Japanese government in 1924; returned to his post at Matsue, but was transferred in January 1925 to Yamaguchi Higher School; began to publish his views on Marxism; gave up his post at Yamaguchi in March 1926 and went to Tokyo to find position at private university; joined communist group shortly thereafter; served as an assistant editor of *Marxism* and published his own journal *Under the Flag of Marxism*; published also in *Social Science* and *Reconstruction*; ideological leader of Second Japanese Communist Party, central committee member, and head of its political department; went to Moscow in 1927 for discussions on strategy and tactics; renounced his theories after Comintern criticism; was dropped from central committee, but was retained as staff member in the agitation-propaganda department under Ichikawa Shoichi; escaped March 1928 arrests but was caught in June 1928; sentenced to ten-year prison term in October 1932; defected from party during World War II; joined Japanese Communist Party in 1949; arrested in September 1951 for anti-Occupation activities but soon released for lack of evidence; left party in 1955 and lived quietly in Fujisawa; taught at Kanagawa University, published his memoirs, and wrote several books on cultural and economic subjects.

HAKAMADA SATOMI. Born in Aomori in 1904; member of leftist faction in Sodomei in 1923; helped to organize Hyogikai in 1925; went to Moscow to study in same year; returned to Japan in 1928 and became active in Second Japanese Communist Party; arrested in June 1928 and remained in jail until October 1932; became member of party's central committee in January 1934 and served also as chief of the organization department and head of Zenkyo fraction; arrested again in March 1935 and remained in jail until 1945; active in the postwar Japanese Communist Party, especially in labor and youth movements, serving on the party's central committee and political bureau, as well as chief of the control department and labor organizing committee in 1946, and as head of Young Communist League, 1946-47; member of the presidium of the Japanese Communist Party after 1958.

ICHIKAWA SHOICHI. Born in Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1892; attended local schools; went to Hiroshima in 1910 to attend higher normal school and left in 1912 to study literature at Waseda University; graduated from Waseda in 1916 and worked for several years as *Yomiuri Shinbun* reporter and for four months as staff member of Tokyo bureau of *Taisho Nichinichi Shinbun*; began working for International Press Service in 1920; studied socialism and came under influence of Yamakawa Hitoshi and Nishi

Masao; member of group that published *The Proletariat*; joined First Japanese Communist Party and arrested in June 1923; was later sentenced to eight months in prison; released from jail on bail, operated left-wing publishing house, Kibokaku; central committee member of Second Japanese Communist Party; headed party in 1927 while other leaders were in Moscow for discussions on strategy and tactics; escaped March 1928 arrests; attended Sixth Comintern Congress in Moscow, July–September, 1928; arrested in April 1929 and sentenced to life imprisonment in October 1932; died in prison in 1945.

INOMATA TSUNAO. Born in Niigata Prefecture in 1889; graduated from middle school in Nagaoka in 1907; served for year with Sixteenth Artillery Regiment and qualified as officer on reserve list in 1909; entered Waseda University as third year student in 1912 to study politics and economics and pursued graduate work at Waseda until 1915; sent by Waseda to United States to continue his study of politics and economics at University of Wisconsin; awarded Ph.D. by Wisconsin in 1920; studied also at the University of Chicago and at Columbia University in this period; met Katayama Sen in New York and was for a time an active member of his socialist group; married Bertha Bronstein, Russian girl who was teaching at Russian immigrants' school in New York; returned to Japan with his wife in 1921 and became lecturer in economics at Waseda; joined Culture League and was active in student movement on Waseda campus; member of First Japanese Communist Party and active in Communist Youth League; presided over March 1923 meeting to discuss 1922 theses; arrested in July 1923 but soon released on bail; sentenced to eight months in jail in September 1926; released from jail in January 1927 as result of general amnesty following death of Taisho emperor; opposed Fukumotoism and joined Ronoha in December 1927, becoming one of its outstanding theorists; member of central executive committee of Proletarian Masses Party in July 1928; a leader of Japan Masses Party, organized in December 1928; began publishing his own semimonthly newspaper, *Labor-Farmer News*, in November 1928; criticized policies of Japan Masses Party and was expelled in September 1929 along with Suzuki Mosaburo and Kuroda Hisao; quit Ronoha in October 1929 and became independent Marxist critic and publicist; arrested in December 1937 in "Popular Front Incident"; became seriously ill in February 1939, was released from prison, and died in January 1942.

KADOYA HIROSHI. Born in Fukuoka in 1901, one of 14 sons of army colonel; graduated from middle school and entered Second Higher School at Sendai in 1920; gained admission to Tokyo Imperial University, studied sociology, and graduated in 1926; adopted through marriage in 1923 by Kadoya

family of Sendai, head of which was lawyer; attracted to Marxism through Russian literature, observance of working conditions at Kamchatka fishery in summer of 1920, and membership in New Men Society; after graduation from university in 1926, was employed by *Tokyo Evening News* and at same time assisted in editing *The Proletarian News*; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and attended Goshiki Conference of December 1926; arrested in 1928 and defected from party in 1929, while in jail.

KAMIYAMA SHIGEO. Born in Shimonoseki in 1905; graduated from Tokyo Seijo Higher School in 1924; entered labor movement and became a leader of the Kanto Free Trade Union; joined Second Japanese Communist Party in 1928; escaped March 1928 arrests; became fraction leader in Zenkyo; active in Japan Proletarian Culture Federation (KOPF), 1932-34; formed small communist group in 1934 to work for reconstruction of party; arrested in 1935 and released on probation in 1936; led small communist group in Tokyo-Yokohama area; arrested in 1941 and remained in jail until 1945; active in postwar Japanese Communist Party, serving as central committee member and chairman of labor union and peasants department, 1945, and as chairman of publications department, 1946; elected to Diet in 1949; expelled from party in 1950 and readmitted in 1958; left party along with Shiga Yoshio in 1964.

KARASAWA SEIHACHI. Born in Nagano Prefecture in 1894, the son of a peasant; attended local schools and served in army, attaining rank of sergeant; went to Tokyo in 1922 to work and returned home after earthquake in September 1923; returned to Tokyo at end of 1923 and became laborer; entered labor school run by Sodomei and became follower of Watanabe Masanosuke; joined Hyogikai in 1925 and became chairman of its Kanto regional organization; joined communist group in 1926 and was leader of cell that included Kawamura Tsuneichi, Akiwa Matsugoro, and later, Asano Akira; ran without success as Labor-Farmer Party candidate from Tokyo's Fourth District in 1928 election for Diet; arrested in March 1928 roundup and sentenced to ten years in prison in October 1932; active in the Japanese Communist Party after war; chairman of Tokyo regional committee; died in July 1966.

KASUGA SHOICHI. Born in Nagano Prefecture in 1907; went to Tokyo to work by day and continue schooling at night; graduated from electric technicians school and employed at Shibaura Works in Tokyo; joined labor movement and was active in Kanto Metal Workers Union; became chairman of Communist Youth League's Tokyo-Yokohama district committee; joined Communist Party early in 1928 and was arrested in the March 15 roundup; released from prison and active in party rebuilding

efforts after 1936; arrested in May 1940; after war, became chairman of the Communist Party's Kanagawa prefectural committee; became member of party's central committee in 1947 and chairman of Kanto regional committee; elected to House of Representatives in 1949; went underground with other communist leaders in 1950; arrested in 1953 but released shortly thereafter; became central committee member again in 1955 and chairman of control committee; became presidium and secretariat bureau member in 1958; elected to House of Councillors in 1965.

KASUGA SHOJIRO. Born in Osaka in 1903, son of antique dealer; completed primary school and worked for two years in cotton yarn store; attracted to study of Russian literature; attended middle school run by the Shingon Sect, but soon transferred to Ritsumeikan Middle School in Kyoto, where he studied for four years; active with Doshisha University students in Kyoto in forming social science study clubs; expelled from school for pressuring fellow students to contribute to Russian relief fund; went to Tokyo and underwent training in printing in municipal vocational program; worked as printer for various publishers; helped to form Kanto Printers Union in October 1923 and to affiliate it with Sodomei in April 1924 and later with Hyogikai; studied in Soviet Union at Kutobe for year beginning in 1925; joined Second Japanese Communist Party; worked in international affairs division of Hyogikai and after December 1927 as chief communist organizer in Osaka-Kyoto area; arrested and jailed in March 1928; released from jail in 1937 and formed small communist group that included Takenaka Tsunesaburo and Matsumoto Soichiro, both of whom were prominent in postwar Japanese Communist Party; arrested in 1938 and imprisoned until 1945; active in postwar Communist Party from 1945 to 1961, when he resigned; would probably have played more important leadership role had he not suffered from poor health.

KAWADA KENJI. Born in Kyoto Prefecture in 1900, son of harbor pilot at Maizuru; completed primary school and worked lathe at local naval arsenal; moved to Osaka, where he worked in foundry (Noda Ritsuta, later head of Hyogikai, was employed there); fired after strike in 1919; went to Tokyo and worked in Japan Iron Works; joined Yuaikai and organized branch of Tokyo Iron Workers Union in his plant; lost his job in postwar recession; became secretary in 1923 of Sodomei's Kanto League; jailed with Matsuo Naoyoshi for participation in spinning mill strike in Shizuoka Prefecture; after his release from jail in April 1924, became involved in clash for control of Kanto Iron Workers Union, a struggle that precipitated Sodomei-Hyogikai split (the left wing elected Kawada as secretary by one vote); joined Second Japanese Communist Party and was leader in Hyogikai; arrested in March 1928 and sentenced to ten years in prison in October

1932; active in postwar communist movement; member of central committee and presidium of Japanese Communist Party after 1965; elected to House of Councillors in July 1968.

KAWAI ETSUZO. Born in Himeji in Hyogo Prefecture in 1903 into wealthy family; graduated from science program of First Higher School at Tokyo and studied economics at Kyoto Imperial University; served in infantry in 1924; became secretary of Kyoto-Shiga Prefectural Federation of Japan Peasant Union in May 1926; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and became candidate member of party's central committee; remained active in peasant movement; sent by party, along with Nakao Katsuo, to Soviet Union in 1927 and participated in discussions on strategy and tactics; in December 1927 became staff member in organization department under Watanabe Masanosuke and chief of local committee in Niigata and Nagano prefectures; escaped arrest in March 1928, but was caught in August of that year; defected from party in 1929; after release from jail, gravitated toward Ronoha; active as publicist on agricultural problems in postwar era; died in August 1966.

KAWAKAMI HAJIME. Born in Iwakuni in Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1879; graduated from Yamaguchi Higher School in 1898; studied politics in law department of Tokyo Imperial University and graduated in 1902; became lecturer in Agricultural College of Tokyo Imperial University and later taught at several other schools, including Peers School; resigned from his teaching posts in 1905 and joined Buddhist group led by Ito Shoshin, who taught principle of renunciation of self; sold his library and donated money to poor; became staff writer for *Yomiuri Shinbun* but resigned in 1907; founded *Japan Economic Review*; became lecturer at Kyoto Imperial University in 1908 and shortly thereafter assistant professor; moved toward materialistic view of history; went to Europe in 1913; returned to Japan in 1915 and was promoted to rank of professor; published famous *Tale of Poverty* in *Osaka Asahi Shinbun*; began publishing *Studies on Social Questions* in January 1919; by 1920 influential academic adviser of student groups on Kyoto campus and a leading teacher of Marxism; forced to resign his professorship in April 1928; turned toward politics, and with Oyama Ikuo and Hososako Kanemitsu helped to form New Labor-Farmer Party in November 1929; ran without success as candidate for Diet in 1930 election; expelled from New Labor-Farmer Party in September 1930 with Hososako and others for advocating dissolution of party and support of communists; joined Japanese Communist Party early in 1932 and was arrested in January 1933; sentenced in August 1933 to five years in jail; defected from the party; released from jail in 1937 and lived in seclusion first in Tokyo and then in Kyoto until his death in 1946.

KAWAUCHI TADAHIKO (real name: Miyamoto Yashichiro). Born in Fukuoka Prefecture in 1900; joined First Japanese Communist Party and began studying Russian at Tokyo School of Foreign Languages; attended Fourth Congress of Comintern in November 1922; arrested in June 1923 and sentenced to jail for eight months; active in Second Japanese Communist Party for a time and joined Institute for Proletarian Scientific Research in 1929; active in organizing Japanese Militant Atheists' Federation as branch of International Proletarian Atheists' Federation, becoming chairman in September 1931; active in rebuilding KOPF; arrested May 29, 1934; sentenced to six years' imprisonment on February 6, 1936, with 360-day stay of sentence; translated many of Lenin's works; after World War II participated in preparation of Japanese editions of works of Marx and Lenin; after 1953 served as executive of the Association of Scholars on the Soviet Union.

KAZAMA JOKICHI. Born in rural area of Niigata Prefecture in 1901; after graduating from middle school, moved to Tokyo and became metal worker; entered labor movement and associated in 1920–21 with members of Socialist League; attracted by communism but did not join First Japanese Communist Party; accepted party invitation to study at Kutobe in Moscow in 1925; after graduation, served as interpreter for numerous Japanese visitors; worked for Far Eastern Section of Eastern Department of Comintern in both Moscow and Vladivostok; sent by Comintern to Japan in November 1930 to lead Japanese Communist Party and to develop strategy and tactics; served as chairman of party's central bureau established in January 1931; published the 1931 theses based on materials prepared by Safarov and Volk in *Red Flag* between April and June, 1931; in September 1931 became head of party's central committee and head of organization, labor union, publications, and technique and funds departments; accepted 1932 theses on orders from Moscow; arrested in October 1932; defected from party in 1933; after World War II became secretary-general of World Democracy Research Institute, whose head was Nabeyama Sadachika; died in July 1968.

KIKUCHI KATSUMI. See Namba Hideo.

KITAURA SENTARO. Born in Nagano Prefecture in 1901; attended primary school in Osaka; became printer in Tokyo; entered labor movement in 1919, joining Tokyo Printing Workers Federation; anarchist follower of Osugi Sakae; arrested for participation in *Hochi Shinbun* strike in 1920 and sentenced to jail for four months; after studying at Kutobe in Moscow, 1921–24, returned to Japan and joined communist group; chief of communist group's youth department, 1925–26; served on editorial board of

The Proletarian News; opposed Fukumotoism and was expelled from communist group in December 1926; joined Ronoha in December 1927 and published translations of Russian literature; arrested in March 1928 round-up; suffered breakdown and was confined in mental clinic; active briefly in labor movement after World War II, but soon disappeared from public life.

KOIWAI KIYOSHI. Born near Matsumoto in Nagano Prefecture in 1897; expelled from local middle school for leading strike against the school principal; went to Tokyo and entered First Higher School; after graduation, enrolled in Tokyo Imperial University; member of New Men Society; graduated from law department in 1922 and became professor at Aichi University but resigned in 1923; began practicing law in Osaka; active in Japan Peasant Union; sentenced to two months in jail for participation in peasant dispute; influenced by Arahata Kanson to join First Japanese Communist Party and became member of its central committee at February 1923 convention; arrested in 1923 and later served eight months in jail; did not join Second Japanese Communist Party but was active in peasant and labor movements; joined Labor-Farmer Party and became member of its central executive committee; member of New Labor-Farmer Party until expulsion in October 1930 over issue of dissolution and support of communist movement; unsuccessful candidate for election to Diet from Ehime in 1928 and from Osaka in 1930; elected to Osaka Municipal Assembly in 1929; became chairman of control committee of National Peasant Union; went to China in 1940 as vice-director of Shanghai Economic Research Institute; became professor at Toa Dobun University in China in 1942; after World War II, professor and later president at Aichi University and active in Japan Political Science Society, Modern Sinology Society, and China Research Institute; died in 1959.

KOKURYO GOICHIRO. Born of poor family in Kyoto in 1903; forced to work as weaver in his early teens after death of his father; active with Nabeyama Sadachika in labor movement in Kyoto-Osaka area; joined First Japanese Communist Party; escaped arrest in June 1923; leader in Hyogikai, serving as member of its control committee, chief of educational and publications division, chief of political division, and chief of its organ *Labor News*; joined Second Japanese Communist Party, and in December 1927 became central committee member and staff member of labor union department; attended Profintern Congress, March–April, 1928; arrested in October 1928; sentenced to 15 years in prison in October 1932; died in 1945.

KONDO EIZO. Born in Tokyo suburb in 1883, son of government official; had only primary school education; lived for some 15 years in United

States until his return to Japan in 1919; worked in the United States as dishwasher, cook, railroad construction worker, and miner; attended agricultural college in California; settled in New York in 1917 and joined socialist group around Katayama Sen; sent back to Japan in 1919 by Katayama to establish direct contact with Sakai Toshihiko and Yamakawa Hitoshi, spread communist ideas, and found a communist party; cooperated with Osugi Sakae in publication of *Labor Movement* in 1921; met with Comintern agents in Shanghai in May 1921; leader of Enlightened People's Communist Party; arrested in December 1921 and subsequently sentenced to ten months in jail; member of communist group established in April 1922; member of executive committee of First Japanese Communist Party; escaped arrest in June 1923 and fled to Moscow, where he served as representative to Profintern; returned to Japan in 1926 and was pardoned under the amnesty following death of Taisho emperor; member of Japan Labor-Farmer Party and later of National Masses Party, serving as central committee member and chief of its Tokyo bureau; active in social welfare work after World War II; died in 1965.

KONNO YOJIRO. Born in 1910; expelled from Yamagata Higher School in 1928 for role in student strike led by Marxism study group; became secretary of Tokyo Federation of Labor Unions in 1929; joined Communist Party in 1929 and became member of organization department; headed Japanese delegation to Fifth Profintern Congress in 1930; returned to Japan with Kazama Jokichi and helped him rebuild party; maintained liaison with Comintern agents at Shanghai; member of party's central committee and officer in organization, youth, and publication departments; arrested in October 1932; active in the postwar Japanese Communist Party, serving as candidate member of the central committee in 1945, central committee member in 1946, political bureau member and chairman of control committee in 1947; went underground with other communist leaders in 1950; served as central committee member 1955-58; active in peasant activities in northern Japan, 1958-61; became member of central committee and secretariat bureau in 1961; joined presidium in 1964.

KOREEDA KYOJI. Born in Kagoshima Prefecture in 1904; graduated from local middle school and entered Seventh Higher School in Kagoshima; became interested in philosophy and then in socialism and Marxism; entered Tokyo Imperial University in 1923 to study sociology; joined New Men Society and became leader in the National Federation of Students; ordered by government to leave school because of his involvement in "Kyoto University Incident" of December 1925; indicted for violating Peace Preservation Law and sentenced to ten months in jail; released on bail pending appeal and became staff member of *The Proletarian News*;

joined Second Japanese Communist Party; arrested along with his wife, Misao, in March 1928; defected from party in 1929; died in Osaka Prison in 1934. (His wife was a daughter of the former chief justice of the Miyagi Higher Court of Appeal. Koreeda met her when she was studying social science at Tokyo Women's College. After marriage, she left school and joined the Communist Party.)

MATSUO NAOYOSHI. Born in Kyoto Prefecture in 1900; completed primary school in Port Arthur; went to Tokyo to work and study; found employment as metal worker in electrical appliance plants but was unable to continue formal schooling; joined Sodomei in 1923 and committed himself to labor movement; active in 1924 in left wing of Kanto Regional Union of Iron Workers along with Sugiura Keiichi and Kawada Kenji; member of union's executive committee; participated in strikes against Niigata Iron Works, Japan Cotton Yarn Spinning Company, and Oki Electrical Appliance Manufacturing Company; arrested for violating Public Peace Police Law during strike against Numazu plant of Fuji Spinning Company and sentenced to two months in jail with stay of three years; leader in Hyogikai and member of its central executive committee from May 1927 to its dissolution in April 1928; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and participated in Goshiki Conference of December 1926; became staff member of party's labor union department under Nabeyama Sadachika in December 1927; arrested in March 1928 and sentenced to ten years in jail in October 1932; released on parole because of illness in March 1935 and died in June of that year.

MINAMI KIICHI. Born in Tokyo in 1891; after finishing primary school, became celluloid worker and later ran a small factory; active opponent of labor movement and helped break strike against Mita Rubber Company in 1922; joined labor movement in 1923 after his brother, a leader of the Nankatsu Union, was murdered by military in "Kamedo Incident"; joined Nankatsu Union and worked with Watanabe Masanosuke; after Sodomei split in May 1925, joined Hyogikai and was union organizer in Tokyo's industrial districts; served in Hyogikai on executive committee of regional organization, as chief of dispute department, and as member of control committee; leader, along with Mitamura Shiro, of strike against Japan Musical Instrument Company at Hamamatsu in 1926; joined Labor-Farmer Party and was a member of its central committee and chief of its political department; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and was chairman of its Kanto regional committee and leading member of its faction in Labor-Farmer Party; ran unsuccessfully for election to the Diet as Labor-Farmer Party candidate from Tokyo's Sixth District in 1928; arrested in March 1928, defected from Communist Party in 1929, and was

paroled in 1930; continued to be active in labor movement in the 1930's; ran for election to the Diet as local proletarian party candidate from Tokyo's Sixth District in 1936 but again was not successful; after war worked with Mizuno Shigeo in Kokusaku Pulp Industry Company as vice-president and became president when Mizuno became chairman.

MITAMURA SHIRO. Born into poor family in Kanazawa in Ishikawa Prefecture in 1896; completed primary school and became apprentice in photography studio in Osaka; found position as office boy and attended evening commercial school, completing course at seventeen; went to Tokyo, where he held variety of jobs—newspaper boy, insurance salesman, hatter, etc.—and studied English; returned to Osaka and entered local institute for training of policemen; joined Osaka police force after graduation; became interested in socialism while keeping Takeda Denjiro under surveillance because of his contacts with Osugi Sakae and Sakai Toshihiko (Denjiro's older brother, Takeda Kyuhei, had been sentenced to life imprisonment in the Kotoku High Treason Case); dismissed from police service in 1919 on charge of violating regulations; went to Tokyo and opened barber supply shop in Kanda that was operated by his wife and brother-in-law; active in Enlightened People's Society and in Socialist League in 1920–21; left his wife for another woman; became printing worker in Osaka and helped organize Osaka Printing Workers Union, which affiliated with Sodomei; suspected for a time of being a police spy; leader in Hyogikai, serving as central committee member, chief of organization and political departments; leader in strike against Japan Musical Instruments Company at Hamamatsu in 1926; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and served as member of the central committee; became staff member of party's organization department and chief organizer in Hokkaido in December 1927; escaped March 1928 police dragnet and avoided arrest after running gun battle in October 1928; leader in Zenkyo; arrested by police along with Nabeyama Sadachika in April 1929 in Akasaka pleasure district; sentenced to life imprisonment in October 1932; renounced communism in 1933; denied readmission to the Japanese Communist Party after the war; unsuccessful candidate for House of Councillors in 1947; active as an anticommunist; died in 1964.

MIYAMOTO KENJI. Born in Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1908; graduated from Tokyo Imperial University in 1931; while a student, won *Reconstruction* essay competition with "Literature of Defeat"; joined Japanese Communist Party in May 1931; literary critic and active in the proletarian cultural associations; member of agitation-propaganda department of the Communist Party in 1932, becoming chief of the department in 1933; became candidate member of the party's central committee in April 1933 and full

member following month; after the "Red Lynching Incident," in January 1934 became head of party's Tokyo committee and editor of *Red Flag*; arrested in 1934 and remained in jail until 1945; a key leader of postwar Japanese Communist Party; became presidium member in 1955 and secretary-general of party in 1958. (His wife, Chujo Yuriko (1899–1951), was active in cultural circles and was arrested in 1931 because of communist sympathies. Miyamoto married her in 1932.)

MIYAMOTO YASHICHIRO. See Kawauchi Tadahiko.

MIZUNO SHIGEO. Born in Shizuoka Prefecture in 1899; graduated from Tokyo Imperial University with law degree in 1924; active in labor movement; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and in December 1927 became chief of party secretariat; arrested in April 1928 and sentenced to two years in jail; defected from party in 1929; gave up politics in 1930 upon release from prison; combined career in literature and business (translated French literary works and in 1940 founded Great Japan Paper Re-manufacturing Company); after World War II, president of Kokusaku Pulp Industry Company (1956), Cultural Broadcasting Company (1956), Fuji Television Company (1957), and *Sangyo Keizai Shinbun* (1958).

MURAO SATSUO. Born in Kagoshima in 1902, son of manager of successful dry goods store; attended local schools and graduated from Seventh Higher School; in higher school years, with Koreeda Kyoji and Kiire Torataro, organized society to study literature, philosophy, and social problems; took part in campaign to raise funds for Russian famine relief; entered Tokyo Imperial University to study sociology; joined New Men Society and was active in student movement; joined communist group in 1925 and was sent to Kyushu early that year to work in labor movement at Yawata, iron and steel production center; became secretary of Sodomei's regional headquarters in Kyushu; after 1926 was active in Hyogikai; became chairman of Kanto regional committee of Japanese Communist Party in 1927; sentenced to jail in May 1927 for activities in student movement; appealed to higher court and was released on bail; escaped March 1928 roundup of communists but arrested shortly thereafter; defected from party in 1929 and retired from political life; served as Japan Socialist Party member in Diet after World War II.

MURAYAMA TOSHIRO. Born in Ibaraki Prefecture in 1899; graduated from First Higher School in Tokyo and from Kyoto Imperial University, specializing in German law; taught English and economics at commercial school in Kobe; director of Osaka branch of Industrial Labor Research Institute and was associated with Kibokaku, a leading left-wing publishing house in

Tokyo; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and was active as party theoretician and organizer in Kansai region; moved to Tokyo at end of 1927 and became staff member of peasant union department of party under Sano Manabu; escaped arrest in March 1928 and returned to Kansai, trying to hide in Osaka; arrested in June 1928; defected from party in 1929; after his release from prison, served for a time with firm in Manchuria.

NABEYAMA SADACHIKA. Born in Fukuoka Prefecture in 1901; grew up in Osaka, where his father became policeman (his father died during his second year of primary school); forced to work with his older sister as apprentice in knitting mill; at sixteen became worker in Osaka electrical appliance plant; joined Yuaikai; came under influence of Arahata Kanson through *Labor News* and joined the Labor and Liberty Society; arrested with Arahata following a demonstration to celebrate an associate's release from prison and sentenced to two months in jail; along with Nakamura Yoshiaki, became active in labor movement as leader in Osaka Electric Industry Workers Union; became director of Sodomei's Kansai league; joined First Japanese Communist Party; escaped arrest in June 1923; leader in Hyogikai after split from Sodomei in May 1925; led strike against Japan Musical Instruments Company with Mitamura Shiro in 1926; joined Second Japanese Communist Party; attended Seventh Enlarged Plenum of Comintern executive committee November–December, 1926, and reported on Fukumotoism; remained in Moscow as Japanese representative to Profintern and participated in discussions on strategy and tactics in 1927; appointed member of party's central committee and chief of labor union department in December 1927; escaped arrest in 1928 and joined with Watanabe Masanosuke and Mitamura Shiro to form provisional central committee; went to Shanghai in September 1928 with Watanabe to consult with Comintern agents and to attend meeting of the Pan-Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat; returned to Japan in February 1929 and assisted Ichikawa Shoichi in rebuilding party; arrested in April 1929 with Mitamura in Akasaka pleasure district; sentenced in October 1932 to life imprisonment; with Sano Manabu, led defection of party members in 1933; served with Japanese authorities in Peking during the 1940's; actively opposed the left wing as a publicist in postwar period; adviser to Japanese business, along with Kazama Jokichi, through World Democracy Research Institute.

NAKAMURA YOSHIAKI. Born in Fukuyama in Hiroshima Prefecture in 1899; attended local primary school; studied at Seisoku English School in Tokyo and junior college of Chuo University; left junior college in second year and worked for a time in law office of Yoshizawa Kanichiro; in 1920 became transformer operator at Osaka Electric Light Company and was active in

Osaka Electric Industry Workers Union; joined First Japanese Communist Party; escaped arrest in June 1923; leader in Hyogikai, serving on the central executive committee and as chief of the political department; served three months in jail in 1925 for violation of Press Law; took part in strike against Osaka Electric Light Company and Japan Musical Instrument Company at Hamamatsu in 1926; joined Second Japanese Communist Party; avoided arrest in March 1928 but was caught shortly thereafter in Shanghai; defected in 1929.

NAKAO KATSUO. Born in Aizu Wakamatsu in Fukushima Prefecture in 1891; attended middle school in Tokyo but forced to leave because of family financial difficulties; worked as office boy for bookstore and publisher (Sanseido); entered commercial school and graduated in 1920; became proofreader for *Chuo Shinbun*; attracted to socialism and labor movement; joined Publishing Workers Union and lost job because of union activities in 1922; worked with Kasuga Shojiro to form Kanto Printers Union after earthquake of September 1923 and became its first chairman; active in Sodomei and then in Hyogikai, serving as chief of Hyogikai's Kanto regional organization after April 1926; leader in strike against Kyodo Printing Company, February–April, 1926; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and became candidate member of its central committee; sent by party to Soviet Union in 1927 and participated in discussions on strategy and tactics; became party central committee member, staff member of organization department, and chairman of Kanto local committee in December 1927; escaped arrest in March 1928 but was caught a month later; sentenced to ten-year prison term in October 1932; defected in 1933; died in jail.

NAMBA HIDEO (alias Kikuchi Katsumi). Born in Okayama Prefecture in 1888; graduated from middle school, went to Osaka, and became reporter on *Osaka Jiji Shinpo*; helped organize Levelers' Society in Osaka; participation in this movement led him to resign newspaper post (chief of city section) in 1922; founded small newspaper, *Our Newspaper*, in one of Osaka's suburbs; cooperated with Koiwai Kiyoshi, Hososako Kanemitsu, and others in publishing *Liberation News* until Sodomei split in 1925; continued to publish *Liberation News* on his own, supporting Yamakawa's idea of single proletarian party; active in formation of Farmer-Labor Party; became chief editor of *Tokyo Evening News*; worked to organize salaried men into union and became chairman of central committee of Japan Salaried Men's Council; left *Tokyo Evening News* and devoted his full time to social movements, including organization of leftist Newspaper Men's Club; central executive committee member of Labor-Farmer Party; joined Second Japanese Communist Party; ran unsuccessfully for election

to Diet as Labor-Farmer Party candidate from Okayama's Second District in 1928; escaped March 1928 arrests; attended Sixth Comintern Congress in Moscow in summer of 1928 and participated in discussions on rebuilding of Japanese Communist Party; returned to Japan and became editor of *The Proletarian News*; arrested in April 1929 and sentenced to prison term.

NISHI MASAO. Born in farm village in Okayama Prefecture in 1896; after finishing local middle school, worked for a time as clerk in Korea; served in army and taught briefly in primary school; went to Tokyo in 1920 and became worker in printing plant; became interested in left-wing movement, coming under influence of Yamakawa Hitoshi; member of Wednesday Society, where he demonstrated skill as theorist; served as editor of *Studies in Socialism* and *Vanguard*; joined First Japanese Communist Party; arrested in June 1923 and sentenced to jail for eight months; became editor of *Marxism* in May 1924; joined Second Japanese Communist Party; arrested in March 1928; after serving prison sentence, worked on research staff of South Manchurian Railway Company; arrested by army secret police in 1944 and died in jail shortly thereafter.

NODA RITSUTA. Born in small village in Okayama Prefecture in 1891; completed primary school and became worker in local government office at twelve; moved to Osaka in 1904 and became apprentice in electric company; during depression following Russo-Japanese War, worked as fireman on small coastal steamship; served in army but was dismissed because of poor health; employed in Osaka iron foundry and in arsenal; volunteered for service as crew member on military transport at time of Tsingtao crisis in 1914; became active in labor movement in 1916 and joined local branch of Yuaikai in 1917; organized iron works and shipyard laborers in Osaka area and involved in numerous strikes from 1919 to 1922; in 1923 helped to found Osaka Machine Workers Union, which was affiliated with Sodomei; chairman of central committee of Hyogikai after split in Sodomei in May 1925; leader in Kyodo Printing Company strike in 1926; joined Second Japanese Communist Party; ran unsuccessfully for Diet in 1928 as Labor-Farmer Party candidate from Osaka First District; arrested in March 1928 and sentenced to two-year prison term with additional five years suspended.

NORO EITARO. Born in Hokkaido in 1900; entered Keio University to study politics and economics; active in student movement and became interested in Marxism; worked at Industrial Labor Research Institute in 1924 where he became associated with Nosaka Sanzo; lectured on political and economic problems at Mita Labor School; wrote thesis on the history of

Japanese capitalism; detained by police as Kanto Gakuren representative in October 1925; arrested April 15, 1926, date of graduation from Keio, and held in Kyoto because of connection with "Kyoto University Incident" of December 1925; sentenced to jail in May 1927 but released on bail pending appeal; completed revision of his thesis in March 1927 and published revised thesis in 1930 as *History of the Development of Japanese Capitalism*; detained by police for 20 days in June 1930; joined Japanese Communist Party in 1930; in April 1931 began to plan with other scholars publication of *Lectures on the History of the Development of Japanese Capitalism* to be based on 1927 theses of Japanese Communist Party; head of party's peasant department, September 1931, member of party's central committee, January 1933, and chairman of central committee and head of political bureau, May 1933; contacted Hirano to edit the *Lectures* in July 1933; arrested in November 1933; died in Shinagawa police station February 19, 1934.

NOSAKA SANZO. Born in Hagi in Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1892, son of small businessman who had gone bankrupt; attended local primary school; after death of parents in 1906, went to live with older brother, successful lumber dealer in Kobe; attended commercial school in Kobe and began to develop interest in socialism; entered Keio University at eighteen to study political economy and became interested in left-wing movement; assumed administrative responsibility for Yuaikai's Labor-Student Society together with Akamatsu Katsumaro and Miyazaki Ryusuke, of Tokyo Imperial University; graduated from Keio in 1917 and formally joined Yuaikai to work as assistant editor of its organ, *Labor and Industry*; chief editor of the magazine *Social Reform*; assigned responsibility for Yuaikai's research activities in 1918; active in the New Men Society; left Japan in 1919 to study labor movement in England; enrolled at London School of Economics and active in British labor circles; joined British Communist Party in 1920; forced to leave England in May 1921; visited France, Switzerland, and Germany; attended Profintern meeting in Moscow at time of Far Eastern Peoples' Congress (January 1922); returned to Japan in spring of 1922 and worked as editor of Sodomei organs; joined First Japanese Communist Party and was member of fraction in Sodomei; arrested in June 1923 and later served eight months in jail; active in Industrial Labor Research Institute and in publication of *Industrial Labor Report* and of *International*; leader in Hyogikai after split in Sodomei in May 1925; an editor of *The Proletarian News*; arrested in March 1928; released on bail for reasons of health in March 1930 and escaped to Soviet Union in March 1931 under instructions of Kazama Jokichi to report to Comintern on 1931 theses; sent by Comintern to United States in 1934 to improve communication with communists in Japan; returned to Moscow to take part in

Seventh Comintern Congress in summer of 1935; sent to United States again, where he published *International News*; returned to Moscow in 1937; settled in Yen-an in April 1940 and in 1944 played role in Japanese People's Emancipation League; returned to Japan in January 1946; prominent leader in postwar Japanese Communist Party, serving as first secretary after 1955 and central committee chairman after 1958. (His wife, Ryoko, works closely with him. She played a leading role in women's affairs in both Sodomei and Hyogikai. She was held for a short time by the police after the March 1928 arrests and joined her husband in flight to the Soviet Union. She has been active in the Japanese Communist Party in the postwar era, serving for a time as chief of the women's department.)

SAKAI TOSHIHIKO. Born in Fukuoka Prefecture in 1870, son of a minor samurai; after attending local schools, entered First Higher Middle School (precursor of First Higher School) in Tokyo; dropped out of school in 1889 and became English teacher at primary school in Osaka; returned to Tokyo and joined staff of *Business News*; worked for a time for *Fukuoka Daily* in Kyushu; returned again to Tokyo in 1899 and joined staff of *Yorozu Choho*, where he came under influence of Kotoku Shusui and Uchimura Kanzo; founded Commoners' Society with Kotoku in 1903 and began publishing weekly *Commoners' News*; appointed secretary of Japan Socialist Party and active in publication of *Commoners' News*; arrested and jailed for two years as result of "Red Flag Incident" of 1908; released from prison in 1910 and founded small agency, with four or five associates, to do translations and miscellaneous writing jobs; in 1915 resumed socialist activities with publication of *New Society* and formation of study club with Takabatake Motoyuki; joined by Yamakawa Hitoshi in 1916; ran for Diet in 1917 in order to propagate socialist ideas, receiving 25 votes; converted to revolutionary Marxism after Russian Revolution; reorganized *New Society* into *New Social Review*; began publishing *Studies in Socialism* in 1919; one of promoters of Socialist League and active in publication of its organ, *Socialism*, essentially a continuation of *New Social Review*; chairman of communist group established in April 1921; chairman of First Japanese Communist Party; arrested June 1923 and sentenced to ten months in jail; did not join Second Japanese Communist Party; affiliated with Ronoha; leader in Proletarian Masses Party in 1928-29; elected to Tokyo Municipal Assembly as Japan Masses Party candidate in 1929, but lost seat in 1930; ran unsuccessfully for Diet as candidate of Tokyo Proletarian Party in 1930; adviser to National Labor-Farmer Masses Party and Social Masses Party in 1930-31; died in 1933.

SANO FUMIO. Born in Gunma Prefecture in 1892 into prosperous family; graduated from Tokyo's First Higher School in 1913 and began studying

philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University same year; left university in second year, taught for a while at college in Yamaguchi, and in 1918 took job in Tokyo in research section of the South Manchurian Railway Company; became staff member of information division of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1922, but had to leave post in 1924 because of illness; joined First Japanese Communist Party; escaped arrest in June 1923; member of communist bureau established in March 1924; participated in drafting Shanghai Theses in January 1925, but shortly thereafter resigned from communist bureau; active in Society for the Study of Politics and in proletarian party movement; helped to reorganize Society for the Study of Politics into communist-dominated Mass Education League in May 1926; strong Fukumotoist; chairman of central committee of Second Japanese Communist Party and chief of peasant department; went to Moscow in 1927 for discussions on party strategy and tactics; dropped from central committee in December 1927; arrested in March 1928, defected from party in 1929, and died of consumption on parole in 1930.

SANO MANABU. Born in Tsuzuki in Oita Prefecture in 1892, son of doctor; attended local schools but forced to leave middle school because of constant difficulties with school principal; attended Seventh Higher School at Kagoshima; enrolled in law school of Tokyo Imperial University in 1914; was attracted to socialism; after graduation, worked for short while for the South Manchurian Railway Company; became lecturer at Waseda University; in 1918 became member of Thursday Club, primarily composed of recent graduates of law department of Tokyo Imperial University, which met at home of Aso Hisashi to discuss current political and social problems (included Nosaka Sanzo); associated also with New Men Society, Builders' League, and Culture League; with Aso Hisashi began publishing *Emancipation* in May 1919; became active in Sodomei in January 1921, especially in All-Japan Miners Federation; joined First Japanese Communist Party in autumn of 1922 and played leading role in Communist Youth League; named member of party's central committee, international affairs secretary, and chairman of education department at February 1923 convention; escaped arrest in June 1923; fled to Moscow and served as representative to Comintern; went to Shanghai with Voitinsky in September 1924; participated in drafting of Shanghai Theses in January 1925; returned to Japan in July 1925, turned himself in to the police, and was sentenced to ten months in jail; became editor of *The Proletarian News* in August 1925; while in jail, appointed to central committee of Second Japanese Communist Party; released from jail in January 1927; opposed Fukumotoism; became chairman of party central committee and chief of peasant union department in December 1927; escaped March 1928 arrests and fled to Moscow; attended Sixth Comintern Congress in summer of 1928; arrested

by Chinese police at Shanghai in June 1929 and turned over to Japanese authorities; sentenced to life imprisonment in October 1932; defected from party with Nabeyama Sadachika in 1933; released from prison and served with Japanese authorities in Peking in early 1940's; after World War II, organized Labor-Farmer Vanguard Party and served as chairman and head of political bureau; resigned from party in 1948; unsuccessful Diet candidate in 1947; lecturer at Waseda; died in 1953.

SHIGA YOSHIO. Born in Hagi in Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1901, son of steamship captain; attended local schools; entered Tokyo's First Higher School in 1919 and began to read Marxist literature; entered Tokyo Imperial University to study sociology in 1922 and joined New Men Society; leader in All-Japan Student Social Science Federation; after graduation in 1925, joined Industrial Labor Research Institute directed by Nosaka Sanzo and contributed to Marxist publications; gained fame as theorist as result of controversy with Akamatsu Katsumaro; joined communist group on invitation of Tokuda Kyuichi and active among student groups; entered army in December 1925 to spread communist influence and served for year in Shimonoseki Heavy Artillery Regiment; returned to civilian life and served as chief editor of *Marxism* until arrest in March 1928; became staff member in agitation-propaganda department under Ichikawa Shoichi in December 1927; sentenced to ten years in prison in October 1932; in postwar era, one of party's top leaders with Nosaka and Tokuda; clashed with Tokuda and Nosaka over party policy in 1950, advocating more radical approach; resumed key position in party in 1951; broke with party in 1964 over issues related to Sino-Soviet split; leader of Voice of Japan. (Shiga's wife, Watanabe Taeko joined the Japanese Communist Communist Party after her graduation from Tokyo Women's College and marriage to Shiga in 1927.)

SOMA ICHIRO. Born at Ashio in 1903, son of copper mine worker; grew up with Kawai Yoshitora, who was killed in "Kamedo Incident" of 1923; completed primary school and worked as apprentice clerk in mine office; went to Tokyo at eighteen, and became associated with Enlightened People's Society; assisted Watanabe Masanosuke in establishing Nankatsu Labor Society; went to Soviet Union at end of 1924 and studied at Kutobe; became fluent in Russian; admitted into Russian Communist Party but without voting privileges; used by Russians for counterespionage purposes, especially investigation of Japanese entering Soviet Union; ordered home by Comintern after March 1928 arrests to help rebuild party; arrested shortly after arrival in April 1928; sentenced to ten years in prison in October 1932.

SUGIURA KEIICHI. Born in Shizuoka Prefecture in 1897; graduated from primary school and worked on land until 1913; went to Tokyo and became laborer first in iron foundry and then in machinery plant; became anarcho-syndicalist under influence of Osugi Sakae; helped to organize Machine Workers Union in 1918; arrested in December 1920 after inaugural rally of Socialist League and served short jail sentence; joined First Japanese Communist Party and active in labor movement fighting against anarcho-syndicalism; headed the Kanto Machine Workers Union; named member of central committee of the Japanese Communist Party at the February 1923 convention; arrested in June 1923 and later sentenced to ten months in jail; leader in Hyogikai after split in Sodomei in May 1925; member of communist bureau, 1925-26; joined Second Japanese Communist Party and was candidate member of central committee; became party central committee member and leader of Hyogikai fraction in December 1927; ran unsuccessfully for Diet as Labor-Farmer Party candidate from First District of Shizuoka Prefecture in 1928; arrested in May 1928 and sentenced to ten years in prison in October 1932; defected from party and died in jail.

TADOKORO TERUAKI. Born in Otaru, Hokkaido, in 1900, son of an army surgeon; had brilliant record in primary and middle school despite family difficulties; refused support from father and worked as clerk for dealer in marine products, teacher of English to Buddhist monks, and tutor; went to Tokyo in 1918 to continue education; came under influence of Yoshino Sakuzo and Abe Isoo; enrolled at Waseda University to study politics and joined Builders' League; took part in inaugural rally of Socialist League and was involved in fracas with police; arrested and jailed for five months; joined *Vanguard*-publishing circle around Yamakawa; joined First Japanese Communist Party; arrested in June 1923 and sentenced to ten months in jail; opposed Fukumotoism and left the communist movement for Japan Labor-Farmer Party in 1926, serving as secretary-general; active also in National Labor-Farmer Masses Party and in Social Masses Party, where he assisted Aso Hisashi in establishing ties with the military; died in 1934.

TAKAHASHI SADAHI. Born in Oita Prefecture in 1905, oldest son of ex-samurai family; attended local schools; in 1921 enrolled in junior college of Tokyo University of Commerce (later Hitotsubashi University); left university in second year to play active role in the outcast movement; attracted to Marxism and became follower of Yamakawa Hitoshi, helping to publish *Vanguard*; active in youth league of outcast movement, 1923-25; studied at Lenin Institute in Soviet Union, 1926-28; member of Japanese delegation to Sixth Comintern Congress in summer of 1928; upon return,

became leading contributor to *Marxism* and leader in Communist Youth League with Sano Hiroshi; arrested in April 1929 and sentenced to 15 years in prison in October 1932; died in jail in 1944. (His wife, Komiyama Tomie, some 11 years his senior, was editor of *Women's Reconstruction* and was active in the women's section of Sodomei.)

TAKASE KIYOSHI. Born in Gifu in 1900; studied economics at Waseda University until withdrawal in 1923; active in Enlightened People's Communist Party in 1921, serving as chairman of publications committee; attended Far Eastern Peoples' Congress in Moscow in January 1922; joined First Japanese Communist Party and active in Communist Youth League; attended Fourth Comintern Congress in November, 1922; served as secretary of party's meeting in March 1923; arrested in June 1923 and later sentenced to eight months in jail; did not join Second Japanese Communist Party; generally inactive politically until after World War II; joined Japan Socialist Party and served on central committee but without much influence; founded little-known Institute for the Study of the Japanese Political Structure in 1956; occasional contributor of memoir material to journals.

TAKATSU SEIDO. Born in 1893 in Hiroshima Prefecture, son of Buddhist priest; studied Buddhism and succeeded to father's position in 1914; became disillusioned with Buddhism and religious life; went to Tokyo, where he entered Waseda University; a founder of both People's League and Builders' League; leader in Enlightened People's Society; collaborated with Osugi Sakae in publication of *Labor Movement* in 1921; member of communist group formed in April 1921; chairman of propaganda committee of the Enlightened People's Communist Party; arrested in December 1921 and sentenced to eight months in jail; member of executive committee of First Japanese Communist Party; appointed head of political affairs department at party's February 1923 convention; escaped arrest in June 1923, fled country, but returned and gave himself up for trial in July 1924; sentenced subsequently to ten months in prison; released from jail in February 1927 under general amnesty; joined Labor-Farmer Party but was inactive because of his opposition to Fukumotoism; after dissolution of Labor-Farmer Party in 1928, founded Central Region Proletarian Party in his home prefecture; unsuccessful as Diet candidate of his party in 1930; joined National Masses Party in 1930; joined Japan Proletarian Party in 1937 and was arrested in December of that year in "Popular Front Incident"; active in socialist movement in postwar era; elected to Diet in 1946 and 1947, but was defeated in 1949; served in Diet again in 1950's and 1960's until defeat in 1963 election; retired and lives in Hiroshima.

TANAKA SEIGEN (KIYOHARU). Born in Hokkaido in 1906; joined labor union movement in Hakodate and Aomori districts and peasant movement in Aomori, and worked with Hakamada Satomi in 1925 and 1926; entered Tokyo Imperial University in 1927 but left in 1929; joined Second Japanese Communist Party in 1927 and was organizer of cells in Tokyo-Yokohama area; in same year, along with Yamamoto Kenzo, led strike of 6,000 long-shoremen in Otaru; arrested in October 1928 but escaped and went underground; worked in 1929 in liaison with Maniwa Suekichi and was member of Tokyo regional committee in charge of its third district; after April 1929 arrests, formed provisional Tokyo regional committee of the party and in July developed it into central bureau along with Sano Hiroshi and Maeno Zenshiro; in January 1930 formally organized party central committee and became its chairman; was arrested in July 1930; defected from the party (possibly because his mother committed suicide after his imprisonment); remained in jail until 1941; lived at a Buddhist temple for a while and then went into business making military equipment; after war went into construction, petroleum, and trading businesses; was active in the anti-communist movement of 1950's; in 1960 sought to influence Zengakuren (All-Japan Federation of Students' Autonomous Associations) in effort to restrain movement against Security Treaty with United States; in November 1963 shot by right-wing elements, and though seriously wounded, survived.

TANIGUCHI ZENTARO. Born in Ishikawa Prefecture in 1899 into poor family; became pottery worker at Higashiyama in Kyoto; active in labor movement in Kyoto area; joined First Japanese Communist Party; escaped arrest in June 1923; leader in Hyogikai after Sodomei split in May 1925; joined Second Japanese Communist Party in December 1926; arrested in March 1928 but released because of poor health; lived under house arrest and wrote proletarian novels under pen names "Kaga Koji" and "Sui Hajime"; arrested again in 1937 and released shortly thereafter; became scenarist for Daiei Film Company and in 1942 *Central Review* correspondent in China; joined Japanese Communist Party after war and worked in Kyoto area; elected to Diet in 1949, 1963, and 1967; served as member of party's central committee.

TOKUDA KYUICHI. Born in village of Nago on Okinawa in 1894 into poor family (both his grandmother and mother had been sold into prostitution); completed middle school and went to Japan to continue schooling, first in Tokyo and then at Seventh Higher School in Kagoshima; unable to support himself, returned home in 1913 and for next few years taught in local primary school and later worked as secretary in district administrative

office; returned to Tokyo in 1917 in hope of better career; held part-time clerical jobs and studied law at Nihon University; participated in demonstrations at time of Rice Riots; awarded law degree in 1920 and took position in office of Tokyo lawyer with strong socialist sympathies; established contact with leading Marxists; joined Yamakawa's Wednesday Society; was regarded as an activist; attended Far Eastern Peoples' Congress in Moscow in January 1922 as representative of communist group; joined First Japanese Communist Party and active in Communist Youth League; arrested in June 1923 and served eight-month jail sentence in 1926-27; member of communist bureau formed in March 1924; attended conference on Shanghai Theses in January 1925; went to Shanghai with Watanabe Masanosuke in May 1925 and helped work out Heller Theses; became chairman of communist group in August 1925 and chief of organization department; attended Sixth Plenum of Comintern executive committee in Moscow in February-March, 1926, served on special committee on Japan, and helped draft Moscow Theses; appointed central committee member and Comintern representative in Japan of Second Japanese Communist Party; went to Moscow in 1927 to participate in discussions on party strategy and tactics; dropped from central committee in December 1927; ran unsuccessfully for Diet as Labor-Farmer Party candidate in 1928; arrested in March 1928 and sentenced to ten years in prison in October 1932; upon release from prison in 1945, helped to reestablish Japanese Communist Party and served as secretary-general; elected to Diet in 1946, 1947, and 1949; went underground in 1950 following purge of party; died in Peking in 1953.

TSUJII TAMINOSUKE. Born in Kyoto in 1893, second son of blacksmith; completed primary school and became shop boy and then factory worker; changed jobs often before settling down as weaver of traditional Kyoto silk; became interested in labor movement and joined Yuaikai in 1919; organized local textile workers and served as Kyoto local leader of Sodomei from 1920 to 1923; joined First Japanese Communist Party; named executive committee member at February 1923 convention; escaped arrest in June 1923 and fled to Russia; returned to Japan in July 1924 and turned himself in to authorities; released on bail pending outcome of communist case; served as secretary of Sodomei's Kyoto headquarters; led attack in Sodomei against Akamatsu Katsumaro in 1925; leader in Hyogikai after Sodomei split in May 1925; leader in Japan Musical Instrument Company strike at Hamamatsu in 1926; began serving ten-month sentence in August 1926 but pardoned in February 1927 under general amnesty after death of Taisho emperor; opposed Fukumotoism and drifted away from communist movement; joined Japan Labor-Farmer Party and later National Masses Party; president of Nishijin Textile Workers Association in Kyoto

in 1930's; active in Japan Socialist Party after World War II and served in Kyoto Prefectural Assembly.

UEDA SHIGEKI. Born in Oita Prefecture in 1899; after finishing middle school, went to Tokyo and found employment as clerk in pharmacy; became interested in left-wing movement and participated in efforts to establish Socialist League; became follower of Yamakawa and served as editor of *Vanguard*; joined First Japanese Communist Party; appointed member of executive committee and chairman of publications department at February 1923 convention; arrested in June 1923 and sentenced to ten months in jail; after release, served as editor of *The Proletarian News*; joined Second Japanese Communist Party; arrested in March 1928 and was not heard of again; probably tortured to death by police in 1932.

WATANABE MASANOSUKE. Born in Ichikawa in Chiba Prefecture in 1899, first son of *tatami* (mat) maker; graduated from primary school in 1912 and went to Tokyo to work in a wine shop; worked in celluloid factory in Kamedo section of Tokyo in 1917; became associated in 1919 with New Men Society and organized "New Men" Celluloid Workers Union in his factory; led strike against management and lost job; employed in soap plant in 1920; upon collapse of Celluloid Workers Union in 1921, helped organize Black Labor Union; gave up job in soap plant in 1922 and with others began publishing *Nankatsu Labor Review*, but turned out only one issue; with Kawai Yoshitora and Soma Ichiro, organized Nankatsu Labor Society in same year (became Nankatsu Labor Union in 1923); joined First Japanese Communist Party; appointed party executive committee member and chairman of labor department at February 1923 convention; active in Sodomei, and in March 1923 formed a Labor Union Left within it with Nabeyama Sadachika and Yamamoto Kenzo; member of group that began publishing *Labor Union* in June 1923 in struggle against anarcho-syndicalists; arrested in same month and later sentenced to jail for eight months; leader in Eastern Tokyo Amalgamated Worker Unions in 1924; member of communist bureau and communist group, 1925-26; participated in formulation of Shanghai Theses in January 1925 and Heller Theses in May 1925; leader in Hyogikai after split in Sodomei in May 1925; became chief of labor union department of communist group in August 1925; participated in Kyodo Printing Company strike from February to April, 1926; served jail sentence from April to August, 1926; became central committee member and chief of organization and labor departments of Second Japanese Communist Party; went to Moscow in 1927 for discussions on strategy and tactics; became central committee member and chief of organization department after party reorganization in December 1927; escaped arrest in March 1928; joined with Nabeyama and Mitamura Shiro to form pro-

visional central committee in April 1928; attended meeting with Nabe-yama of Pan-Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat in Shanghai in September 1928; killed himself during gun battle with police at Keelung, Taiwan, in October 1928. (His wife, Tanno Setsuko, whom he married in 1924, was active in the labor movement and assisted him in party activities. She served as chief of Hyogikai's women's department and participated in a number of strikes. She was arrested by the police in September 1928, but was soon released and hospitalized because of illness.)

YAMAKAWA HITOSHI. Born in Kurashiki in 1880; completed primary school in 1895; went to Kyoto and continued his education at Doshisha, a Christian school; was converted to Christianity, which he later renounced because of Doshisha "subservience" to the Ministry of Education; dropped out of Doshisha in 1897 and went to Tokyo; helped found the magazine *Gospel To Youth*; was arrested and sentenced to three years and six months in jail and fined 120 yen on charge of lèse majesté because of article on marriage of crown prince in 1900; upon release from prison, moved to Okayama and worked as clerk in medical supplies store for several years; moved to Osaka in autumn of 1906 and joined staff of *Osaka Commoners' News*; returned to Tokyo early in 1907 and joined daily *Commoners' News*, which had just been founded; came under influence of Kotoku Shusui and Sakai Toshihiko; arrested and sentenced to jail for month and half for violation of Public Peace Police Law; founded *Laborer* in 1908 and was again arrested and jailed for two months for violating Press Law; involved in "Red Flag Incident" of 1908 and sentenced to two years in prison at hard labor; after release, returned to Kurashiki, where he became drug dealer and country photographer; closed store in 1915 and went to Kago-shima to raise livestock; returned to Tokyo in 1916 to collaborate with Sakai Toshihiko in propagation of socialist ideas; contributed to *New Society*, *New Social Review*, and *Studies in Socialism*, 1916-1921; was converted to revolutionary Marxism after Russian Revolution; one of promoters of Socialist League and active in publication of its organ, *Socialism*, essentially a continuation of *New Social Review*, 1920-21; helped form communist group in April 1921; executive committee member of First Japanese Communist Party; leading theoretician of communist movement from 1922 to 1924, publishing in *Vanguard* and other journals; supported dissolution of party in 1924; worked thereafter for a united front legal proletarian party; formed Ronoha with followers in December 1927 and opposed 1927 theses in years following; retired from political activity and settled down in Kamakura after Manchurian Incident in 1931; arrested in December 1937 in the roundup of the Ronoha at time of "Popular Front Incident"; after World War II, became senior adviser to labor and socialist movements, continuing to maintain the Ronoha revolutionary view; died in 1958. (His wife, Kikue, was interested in socialism before

her marriage to Yamakawa. She was a leader in socialist feminist movements in the 1920's and was active in Hyogikai's women's department. She served in the postwar era as chief of the women's and youth bureau of the Labor Ministry.)

YAMAMOTO KENZO. Born in Ibaraki Prefecture in 1895 into poor peasant family; completed primary school and went to Tokyo, where he became factory worker; became skilled metal worker as a result of experience in naval and military arsenals and at Shibaura Manufacturing Company; joined Yuaikai, 1912; became labor agitator and led demonstrations at time of Rice Riots; arrested for instigating destructive mass "march to the Ginza" in downtown Tokyo in August 1918 and charged with sedition; sentenced to year and a half in jail; participated in Hitachi mine strike in November 1919 while on parole, and sentenced to jail for term of six months; quit job at Japan Machine Manufacturing Company in 1920 and became full-time labor agitator; attracted to communism and studied in Soviet Union, 1922-23; joined First Japanese Communist Party and was member of Labor Union Left in Sodomei; escaped arrest in June 1923 and fled to Russia; returned to Japan in June 1924 and turned himself in to police; subsequently served an eight-month jail sentence from June 1926 to February 1927; leader in Hyogikai and member of Second Japanese Communist Party; appointed party central committee member and leader of Labor-Farmer Party fraction in December 1927; ran unsuccessfully for Diet as Labor-Farmer Party candidate in 1928; arrested in March 1928 but released because of poor health; fled to Russia; attended Sixth Comintern Congress and served as representative to Profintern and later to Comintern; victim of Stalin's purge in 1937 but did not lose life; died of tuberculosis in April 1942.

YOSHIKAWA MORIKUNI. Born in Tokyo in 1885; associated with Kotoku Shusui and Sakai Toshihiko in Commoners' Society founded in 1904; arrested and jailed in 1906 for participating in demonstration against increase of streetcar fares in Tokyo; together with Nishikawa Kojiro, published *Tokyo Socialist* in 1908; went into printing business after High Treason Case in 1910; joined Sakai's group in publishing *New Society* in 1917; one of promoters of Socialist League in 1920-21; member of communist group formed in April 1921 and executive committee member and treasurer of First Japanese Communist Party (his printing business was an important source of party funds); arrested in June 1923 and subsequently sentenced to ten months in jail; did not join Second Japanese Communist Party; elected to Tokyo Municipal Assembly in 1926; joined group around *The Masses*; cooperated with Ronoha; member of Tokyo Proletarian and Social Masses parties; arrested in "Popular Front Incident" in December 1937 but released because of illness; died in August 1939.

Chronology

1921

- APRIL Yi Chung-rim, representing Comintern, contacts Japanese "bolsheviks." Yamakawa Hitoshi, Sakai Toshiko, Arahata Kanson, Kondo Eizo, and others form communist group.
- MAY Kondo attends Comintern-sponsored meeting in Shanghai, secures Comintern financial support.
Kondo arrested by police after disembarkation at Shimonoseki.
- JUNE-JULY Taguchi Unzo and Yoshiwara Gentaro attend Third Comintern Congress and inaugural congress of Profintern.
- JULY Kondo released from jail.
- AUGUST Enlightened People's Communist Party formed with Kondo as chairman.
- SEPTEMBER Chang T'ai-lei, representing Comintern, consults with Sakai and Yamakawa regarding Japanese participation in Far Eastern Peoples' Congress.
- NOVEMBER Kondo again arrested, ultimately receives a ten-month sentence.
- DECEMBER Forty members of the Enlightened People's Communist Party arrested.

1922

- JANUARY Yamakawa and followers establish *Vanguard*.
Japanese delegates, including Takatsu Seido and Tokuda Kyuichi, attend Far Eastern Peoples' Congress; special committee discusses formation of Japanese Communist Party.
- APRIL Sakai and followers establish *The Proletariat*.
- MAY Takase Kiyoshi and Tokuda return from Russia with plan to establish Japanese Communist Party.
- JUNE Watanabe Masanosuke and other labor radicals establish *Labor Union*.
- JULY First Japanese Communist Party secretly organized; executive committee: Sakai (chairman), Yamakawa, Arahata, Yoshikawa Morikuni, Hashiura Tokio, Takatsu, and Kondo.
- AUGUST Yamakawa publishes "Change of Direction in the Proletarian Movement" in *Vanguard* and calls for "The United Front of the Proletariat" in *Emancipation*.

- SEPTEMBER Communists become active in Kanto League of Japan Peasant Union, publish *Peasant Movement*.
Takase and Kawauchi Tadahiko sent to Fourth Comintern Congress to report on establishment of party.
- OCTOBER Watanabe Masanosuke organizes Nankatsu Labor Union.
- NOVEMBER Fourth Comintern Congress recognizes Japanese Communist Party; Japan committee prepares draft platform for party.
Sano Manabu and Inomata Tsunao help establish National Federation of Students.
- DECEMBER Watanabe, Yamamoto Kenzo, and Nosaka Sanzo form secret "preparatory" committee in Sodomei (becomes Labor Union Left in March 1923).

1923

- FEBRUARY Japanese Communist Party holds second congress at Ichigawa; new executive committee selected.
- MARCH Japanese Communist Party holds special meeting at Shakujii to discuss draft platform.
- APRIL *Red Flag*, merger of *Vanguard*, *The Proletariat*, and *Studies in Socialism*, published by Japanese communists.
Communist Youth League formed with Kawai Yoshitora of Nankatsu Labor Union as leader.
- MAY Waseda University Incident: Confrontation of leftist and rightist students; police led to investigate further, obtain party documents.
- JUNE First Communist Incident: 50 communists arrested, 30 ultimately sentenced to jail. Sano Manabu, Kondo, Takatsu, Tsujii Tamino-suke, and Yamamoto flee to Soviet Russia.
Arahata attends Third Enlarged Plenum of Executive Committee of Comintern (ECCI).
- SEPTEMBER Kamedo Incident: Nine members of the Nankatsu Labor Union, including Kawai Yoshitora, and Hirasawa Keishiichi, murdered by authorities.
Osugi Sakae murdered in jail.
- NOVEMBER Leveler Youth League established.
Arahata returns from Soviet Union, finds communist leaders favor dissolution of the party.
- DECEMBER Society for the Study of Political Problems established (becomes Society for Political Studies in June 1924).

1924

- MARCH First Japanese Communist Party dissolved at meeting at Morigasaki; Arahata, Tokuda, Sano Fumio, Aono Suekichi, and Kitahara Tatsuo form communist bureau.
- APRIL Comintern disapproves party dissolution, summons Sano Manabu and Kondo from Vladivostok to Moscow.

- MAY Communist bureau begins to publish *Marxism*.
- JUNE–JULY Fifth Comintern Congress: Committee on Japan recommends reestablishment of Japanese Communist Party.
- JULY Sano Manabu sent to Shanghai with Gregorii Voitinsky to work for reestablishment of Japanese Communist Party.
National Federation of Students holds second convention in Kyoto, changes name to All-Japan Student Social Science Federation.
- OCTOBER Watanabe and five other communists expelled from Kanto federation of Sodomei.
- DECEMBER Communist-influenced unions form Kanto District Council of Sodomei, establish *Labor News*.

1925

- JANUARY Japanese communist leaders meet with Voitinsky at Shanghai and formulate program (Shanghai Theses) for reestablishment of Japanese Communist Party.
- MARCH Sano Fumio and Aono resign from communist bureau and are replaced by Watanabe, Kitaura Sentaro, and Sugiura Keiichi.
Sodomei orders dissolution of Kanto District Council.
- APRIL League to Reform Sodomei, comprising 25 unions, established under communist influence.
Peace Preservation Law passed.
- MAY Universal Manhood Suffrage Law passed.
Watanabe and Tokuda meet with Sano Manabu and L. Heller at Shanghai and formulate labor program (Heller Theses).
Sodomei expels 25 “reform” unions.
Japan Labor Union Council (Hyogikai), comprising 32 unions, established under communist influence.
- JULY Communist Youth League reestablished under leadership of Kitaura and Katayama Mineto.
Sano Manabu returns to Japan.
Jacob Janson, Comintern representative, takes up post at Soviet Embassy in Tokyo.
- AUGUST Communist group, with Tokuda as chairman, formed by communist bureau members; Shanghai Theses approved; Yamakawa and Sakai do not participate.
Communist Youth League merges with Leveler Youth League, prepares for organization of All-Japan Proletarian Youth League.
- SEPTEMBER *The Proletarian News* established with Sano Manabu as editor.
- OCTOBER Fukumoto Kazuo begins to emerge as leading communist theoretician with article in *Marxism* advocating “unity through separation” and “theoretical struggle.”
- DECEMBER Farmer-Labor Party is organized and banned immediately.
Kyoto University Incident: Police arrest 38 members of All-Japan Student Social Science Federation.
All-Japan Proletarian Youth League holds first national convention.

Maniwa Suekichi arrested in Kobe with texts of Shanghai and Heller theses.

Communist group at policy meeting decides to intensify campaign to reestablish Japanese Communist Party.

Japan Proletarian Literary Arts League is established with communist participation.

Tokuda leaves for Moscow to attend Sixth Plenum of ECCI.

1926

- FEBRUARY Sixth Plenum of ECCI convened; committee on Japan drafts program (Moscow Theses) calling for reestablishment of Party.
- MARCH Communists arrested in June 1923 begin serving sentences. Labor-Farmer Party established; Hyogikai, Society for Political Studies, and Proletarian Youth League denied membership.
- APRIL Japan Musical Instrument Company strike led by Hyogikai begins (and lasts until August); tactics learned from the Chinese communists are used.
- MAY Tokuda returns to Japan.
- JUNE Communist group meets in Gunma Prefecture, approves Moscow Theses, and decides to hold party convention in February 1927.
- OCTOBER Japan Farmer Party established. Labor-Farmer Party lifts restrictions on membership.
- NOVEMBER Nabeyama Sadachika attends Seventh Enlarged Plenum of ECCI, reports on Fukumotoism.
- DECEMBER Japanese Communist Party reestablished in meeting at Goshiki spa. Fukumotoists dominate central committee: Sano Fumio (chairman), Fukumoto, Watanabe, Sano Manabu, Tokuda, Ichikawa Shoichi, and Nabeyama. Social Democratic and Japan Labor-Farmer parties established.

1927

- JANUARY Communist leaders released from jail; debate over Fukumotoism intensifies. Central committee meets at Kusatsu spa, decides to send delegation to Moscow to settle issue of party program.
- FEBRUARY Kawai Etsuzo, Watanabe, and Nakao Katsuo leave for Moscow, where they join Nabeyama and Takahashi Sadaki; Tokuda, Sano Fumio, Fukumoto arrive later.
- MARCH All-Japan Peasant Union formed.
- MAY Eighth Plenum of ECCI meets; committee on Japan convenes.
- JULY Comintern adopts program for Japan (1927 Theses); appoints new Party central committee: Watanabe, Arahata, Ichikawa Shoichi, Nabeyama, Sugiura, Nakao, Kokuryo, Sano Manabu, and Yamamoto.
- NOVEMBER Watanabe returns to Japan and takes over leadership of party.
- DECEMBER Japanese Communist Party central committee meets at Nikko, for-

mally adopts 1927 Theses, and begins reorganization of party; Arahata declines to become member of committee.
Yamakawa, Inomata, Arahata, and others establish *Labor-Farmer*; group becomes known as the Ronoha.

1928

- JANUARY** Japanese Communist Party participates in first general election campaign; 11 communists run as Labor-Farmer Party candidates.
- FEBRUARY** *Red Flag* reestablished; becomes first official party organ.
Communist Youth League reorganized.
Communist candidates defeated in general election.
Ronoha members expelled by the Japanese Communist Party.
- MARCH** March 15 Incident: 1,200 suspected communists arrested, 500 indicted.
Kokuryo attends Fourth Congress of Profintern; Hyogikai admitted as Japanese branch.
All-Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts (NAPF), outgrowth of Japan Proletarian Literary Arts League, established under communist influence and begins publishing *Battle Flag*.
- APRIL** Nakao and Mizuno Shigeo arrested.
Watanabe, Nabeyama, and Mitamura Shiro establish provisional central committee of Japanese Communist Party.
Labor-Farmer Party, Hyogikai, and All-Japan Proletarian Youth League banned by government.
Association for Rebuilding the Labor-Farmer Party and Preparing for a New Party established; it is banned but continues to operate illegally.
Comintern begins sending home Japanese communist trainees in Moscow.
- MAY** The National Peasant Union (Zenno) formed through merger of Japan Peasant Union and All-Japan Peasant Union.
- JUNE** Murayama Toshiro and Fukumoto arrested.
Peace Preservation Law amended to include death penalty.
- JULY** Proletarian Masses Party established.
Sixth Comintern Congress convenes (and lasts until September); Yamamoto, Sano Manabu, Ichikawa Shoichi, and Takahashi Sadaki participate.
- AUGUST–OCTOBER** Forty party members arrested, including Kokuryo, temporary head of the party.
- SEPTEMBER** Watanabe and Nabeyama go to Shanghai, hear Chou En-lai report on the Comintern Sixth Congress.
- OCTOBER** Sano Manabu and Comintern representatives draft new theses (1928 Theses) for Japanese Communist Party; decision taken to transform Japanese Communist Party into a “mass” party.
Watanabe kills himself; Mitamura takes over provisional leadership of Japanese Communist Party.

- NOVEMBER Ichikawa Shoichi returns from Moscow, establishes new Japanese Communist Party central bureau; party approves 1928 Theses.
- DECEMBER Japan Masses Party, National Council of Japanese Labor Unions (Zenkyo), under communist influence, and Labor-Farmer League for Securing Political Freedom established.
Ichikawa Shoichi, Maniwa, and Sunama Kazuyoshi hold conference of Japanese Communist Party central bureau at Mt. Tsukuba.

1929

- JANUARY Labor-Farmer Masses Party established.
Japanese Communist Party central bureau calls for mass party.
Communist Youth League reestablished under Sano Hiroshi and Takahashi Sadaki.
- FEBRUARY Nabeyama returns to Japan, becomes co-leader of central bureau.
Proletarian Youth, organ of the Communist Youth League, established.
- MARCH Namba Hideo and Maniwa arrested; party roster falls into police hands.
- APRIL Japanese Communist Party forms new central committee: Ichikawa Shoichi, Nabeyama, Mitamura, and Sano Manabu.
April 16 Incident: Over 700 suspected communists arrested; leaders who escape arrested soon after; party decimated.
Marxism suspended after five years of publication.
Kawai Etsuzo defects from Japanese Communist Party; others in jail, including Murayama and Mizuno, follow.
- JULY Japanese Communist Party central bureau reestablished under leadership of Tanaka Seigen, Sano Hiroshi, and Maeno Zenshiro.
Red Flag, suspended in April, recommences publication.
- AUGUST *The Proletarian News*, banned by government, ceases publication.
- SEPTEMBER *The Second Proletarian News* established.
Japanese Communist Party expels the "dissolutionist" defectors.
- OCTOBER Central bureau meets at Shimobe spa.
- NOVEMBER New Labor-Farmer Party established with communists excluded.
Central bureau establishes Struggle League for Diet Dissolution, dominated by advocates of direct action.
- DECEMBER Tokyo Proletarian Party established.

1930

- JANUARY Japanese Communist Party central committee holds reorganization meeting at Nirigahama; new central committee: Tanaka, Sano Hiroshi, Maeno, Saito Takeshi, Sakinaka Toranosuke, and Abe Yoshimi.
- FEBRUARY Communist elements form armed bands during general election campaign, call for armed strikes and destruction of factories.
February Incident: 1,500 suspected communists, including Maeno, Abe, and Sakinaka, arrested.

- APRIL Communist fraction in National Peasant Union helps establish Council for Making Zenno Militant (Senkyo).
- MAY Communists resort to violence in May Day "struggle."
Japanese Communist provisional central committee established: Tanaka, Iwao Iesada, and Imamoto Bunkichi; criticizes May Day "adventurism."
- JUNE Zenkyo Renovation League established.
Communist "dissolutionists" form Workers' Faction.
- JULY Japanese Communist Party central bureau reorganized; Tanaka, Iwao, and Imamoto remain central committee members.
Police carry out another national roundup of suspected communists, arrest Tanaka, Iwao, and Imamoto.
Zenkyo delegation leaves for Profintern Fifth Congress; Konno Yojiro, studying in Moscow, appointed leader.
National Masses Party established.
- AUGUST Fifth Profintern Congress orders Zenkyo Renovation League to dissolve.
Comintern begins to revise 1927 Theses.
- NOVEMBER Kazama Jokichi, sent by Comintern to rebuild Japanese Communist Party, arrives in Japan.
Zenkyo Renovation League formally dissolved.

1931

- JANUARY New Japanese Communist Party central committee formed: Kazama (chairman), Konno, Iwata Yoshimichi, and Matsumura Noboru.
- FEBRUARY Communist Youth League reestablished under Konno.
- MARCH Nosaka sent to Moscow by Kazama.
Communist fraction in Zenno forms Zenno National Congress, establishes *Farmer News*.
- APRIL Japanese Communist Party central committee begins publication of "draft political theses" (1931 Theses) in *Red Flag* (completed in June 15 issue).
- JUNE Public trial of communist leaders begins.
- JULY National Labor-Farmer Masses Party established.
- AUGUST Japanese Communist Party central committee reorganized: Kazama (chairman), Iwata, Konno, Tai Tameshichi, Mizogami Yakuma, Shirakawa Yoshimatsu, and Miyagawa Torao.
- NOVEMBER Japan Proletarian Culture Federation (KOPF) established under leadership of Kurahara Korehito.

1932

- MARCH Comintern publishes criticism of 1931 Theses in *Communist International*.
Japanese Communist Party discontinues support of *The Second Proletarian News* in order to publish *Red Flag* as a daily (but is able to publish it only six times a month).

- APRIL Communist fraction in Japan Proletarian Culture Federation arrested.
- MAY Comintern returns to strategy of bourgeois-democratic revolution for Japan in 1932 Theses.
- JULY Social Masses Party established.
- SEPTEMBER Japanese Communist Party establishes *Friend of the Soldiers* for distribution in Japanese army, plan *High Mast* for navy.
- OCTOBER Public trial of communist leaders concludes; they are sentenced to long jail terms.
Omori Bank Incident: Communist gang robs Kawasaki Daiichi Bank in Omori.
Mass arrest of communists, including most central committee members.
- NOVEMBER *The Second Proletarian News* ceases publication.
Iwata tortured to death by police.
- DECEMBER Yamamoto Masami returns to Japan with orders to rebuild party and implement 1932 Theses; new central committee formed: Yamamoto (chairman), Noro Eitaro, Taniguchi Naohei, Oizumi Kenzo, and Sahara Yasuji. (Yamashita Heiji and Miyamoto Kenji added in March and April, respectively.)

1933

- FEBRUARY Kobayashi Takiji arrested and murdered by police. Zenkyo leaders arrested.
- APRIL Ueda Shigeki, central committee member, arrested, disappears.
Zenno National Congress leaders arrested; congress goes underground.
- MAY Yamamoto Masami, Taniguchi, and Yamashita arrested; Sahara disappears.
Noro emerges as party leader, heads new secretariat: Miyamoto Kenji, Oizumi, Henmi Shigeo, and Obata Tatsuo.
- JUNE Sano Manabu and Nabeyama announce their defection; expelled by party.
- JULY Takahashi Sadaki, Nakao, Mitamura defect; other defections follow.
- SEPTEMBER Communist Youth League leaders arrested.
- NOVEMBER Noro Eitaro arrested (dies in jail in February 1934).
- DECEMBER Red Lynching Incident: Japanese Communist Party central committee members try Obata and Oizumi as spies; Obata dies under torture; Oizumi escapes and turns himself over to police in January 1934.
Japanese Communist Party reorganized; new central committee: Miyamoto Kenji (chairman), Hakamada Satomi, and Akizasa Masanosuke.
Miyamoto and Henmi arrested.

1934

- APRIL Miyauchi Isamu and Yamamoto Aki form dissident group calling for new leadership in Japanese Communist Party (called Majority Faction after name of organ established in July).
Japanese Communist Party expels Sugiura, Kazama, Tanaka, Iwao, Sano Hiroshi, and other defectors.
Supreme Court refuses appeals of communist leaders sentenced in October 1932.
- MAY Zenkyo leaders arrested.
- JUNE Eighteen Majority Faction leaders expelled by party.
Nosaka begins publishing material in New York for Japanese Communist Party.

1935

- MARCH Hakamada Satomi, last central committee member, arrested; party organization completely destroyed.
- JULY Seventh Congress of Comintern convenes, adopts "popular front" line; Nosaka and Yamamoto Kenzo participate.
Nosaka returns to United States to publish propaganda for distribution in Japan.

1936

- FEBRUARY Nosaka and Yamamoto Kenzo issue "A Letter to the Japanese Communists" calling for a popular front.
- JULY Kobayashi Yonosuke sent from Moscow to rebuild Japanese Communist Party.
- AUGUST *Red Flag* ceases publication.
- SEPTEMBER Communists in Kansai area establish preparatory committee for reestablishment of Japanese Communist Party.
- DECEMBER Police arrest 1,300 suspected communists.
Kamiyama Shigeo attempts to rebuild Japanese Communist Party upon release from prison.

1937

- FEBRUARY Japan Proletarian Party established, calls for popular front.
- DECEMBER Kobayashi Yonosuke arrested.
Kasuga Shoichi and followers establish Japanese Communist Band.
Ronoha members arrested along with 400 members of legal left-wing organizations.

1938-1946

- SEPT. 1938 Kasuga Shojiro arrested.
- NOV. 1939 Communist groups merge to form Party Reestablishment Group.
- APRIL 1940 Nosaka arrives in Yenan.

- MAY 1940 Party Reestablishment Group with 45 members arrested.
- JUNE 1940 Group of 90 communists, including Tokyo Imperial University students, and Kansai communist group of 60 arrested.
- MAY 1941 Kamiyama Shigeo and 70 members of a party rebuilding group arrested.
- MAY 1943 Comintern dissolved.
- JAN. 1944 Nosaka organizes the Japanese People's Emancipation League.
- OCT. 1945 Communist leaders, including Tokuda, Shiga, Kasuga, Hakamada, and Miyamoto, released from prison.
- Nov. 1945 First [legal] National Consultative Conference of the Japanese Communist Party.
- DEC. 1945 Fourth Congress of the Japanese Communist Party; Tokuda elected secretary-general.
- JAN. 1946 Nosaka returns to Japan.

Notes

Bibliography

Index

Notes

CHAPTER 1

1. In writing this introductory chapter, the authors have relied primarily on the following works: Akamatsu Katsumaro, *Nihon Shakai Undo Shi* (1949); Arahata Kanson, *Nihon Shakaishugi Undo Shi* (1948); Hyman Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary: The Life of Sen Katayama* (Princeton, N.J., 1964); George Oakley Totten III, *The Social Democratic Movement in Prewar Japan* (New Haven, Conn., 1966); G. T. Shea, *Leftwing Literature in Japan* (1964); Okochi Kazuo, *Labor in Modern Japan* (1958); Robert A. Scalapino, unpublished manuscript on the history of the Japanese labor movement; and Iwao F. Ayusawa, *A History of Labor in Modern Japan* (Honolulu, 1966).

2. Kublin, pp. 114ff.; Totten, p. 23; and Okochi, p. 25.
3. Shea, pp. 10–11. See also Ike, p. 277.
4. Shea, p. 21. See also Kublin, “The Japanese Socialists,” pp. 322–39.
5. Kublin, “The Japanese Socialists,” p. 332, citing a letter from Kotoku to Albert Johnson in August 1905; and Elison, pp. 446–54.
6. Ike, pp. 232–36, and Elison, pp. 454–62.
7. Ike, p. 235, and Elison, pp. 462–65.
8. “Chiisaki Hataage” (Raising a Small Flag), *Shin Shakai*, September 1915, p. 3; cited in Shea, p. 39.
9. Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary*, pp. 261–87.
10. Silberman, “The Democratic Movement in Japan,” p. 117.
11. For Yoshino’s thought, in addition to Silberman’s dissertation cited above, see the following: Tsunoda *et al.*, pp. 724–46; Perry; and Silberman, “Yoshino.”
12. For details about the student movement, see the following: Silberman, “The Democratic Movement,” pp. 160–73; Perry, pp. 93–100; and Smith, pp. 162–229.
13. Okochi, pp. 39–41.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
15. Scalapino, manuscript on the labor movement.
16. Yamada Seizaburo, *Nihon Puroretaria Bungaku Shi* (History of Japanese Proletarian Literature), I (1954), 34; cited in Shea, p. 70.
17. Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary*, pp. 226–27.
18. *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, October 1920, pp. 2843–46; cited in Swearingen and Langer, p. 253n.
19. Communist International, *The Second Congress*, p. 579.
20. V. I. Lenin, “Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Nuclei Secretaries of the Moscow Organization of the Russian Communist Party, November 26, 1920,” *Selected Works*, VIII, (New York, 1928), 283–84.
21. *Die Kommunistische Internationale*, Moscow-Petrograd, 1921, p. 149; cited in Swearingen and Langer, p. 9.

CHAPTER 2

1. Scalapino and Lee, p. 23.
2. Osugi, pp. 17–20, 22–23, 31–32. According to Arahata, Osugi received funds

for the publication of a journal after agreeing to take on a "bolshevist" editor (Arahata, *Kyosanto*, p. 8.).

3. Osugi, p. 32.
4. Kondo, p. 106. See also Ministry of Justice, Criminal Affairs, "Waga Kuni," p. 34.
5. Arahata, *Sa no Menmen*, p. 162.
6. Kondo, pp. 128-33.
7. Scalapino and Lee, p. 24.
8. Kondo, p. 151; Osugi, p. 34.
9. See Ministry of Justice, *Nihon Shakaishugi*, p. 23, or the mimeographed text edited by Itoya and Yamabe.
10. For Kondo's rambling account of the affair, see Kondo, pp. 133-50.
11. Kondo is probably referring to the material he and Yamakawa prepared for the "communist group." Kondo, pp. 169-70.
12. See Japanese Communist Party, *Ichikawa*, pp. 36-43.
13. For detailed information on the Enlightened People's Communist Party and the activities of Shigeta and Grey, see Ministry of Justice, *Shuppanho*, especially the interrogation of Shigeta, pp. 3-8; and Metropolitan Police Board, pp. 64-65.
14. *Protokoll des III. Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* (Hamburg, 1921), p. 1023; cited in Carr, III, 389-92.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 392.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 397. See also McKenzie, p. 32.
17. Carr, III, 388.
18. Zinoviev, p. 51.
19. Watanabe Haruo, *Nihon Marukusushugi Undo*, pp. 131-32.
20. Carr, III, 399.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 400.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 401.
23. Whiting, pp. 77-78.
24. *Pervyi Sezd Revoliutsionnykh Organizatsii Dalnego Vostoka. Sbornik*. (First Congress of the Revolutionary Organizations of the Far East. A Collection of Materials) (Petrograd, 1922), p. 290; cited in Eudin and North, p. 146n.
25. B. Z. Shumiatsky, "Iz Istorii Komsomola i Komparti Kitaia. Pamiati Odnogo iz Organizatorov Komsomola i Kompartii Kitaia tov Chang T'ai-lei" (On the Communist Youth and Communist Party of China. In Memory of One of the Organizers of the Communist Youth and Communist Party of China, Comrade Chang T'ai-lei), *Revoliutsionnyi Vostok*, 4-5 (1928), 225-26; cited in Eudin and North, p. 145.
26. Tokuda, *Waga Omoide*, p. 74; Watanabe Haruo, *Nihon Marukusushugi Undo*, pp. 149-50. For another account, see Yamakawa, *Shakaishugi e*, p. 186.
27. Osugi, p. 36.
28. Shumiatsky, p. 227 (see note 25 above); cited in Eudin and North, p. 145.
29. Nosaka came to the attention of a Profintern leader, Lozovsky, through his pamphlet *A Brief Review of the Labor Movement in Japan*, which was published in Moscow in 1921.
30. Oba was one of the first Japanese to publish in *International Press Correspondence*. He wrote a short piece on the Socialist League in the issue of November 11, 1921.
31. Watanabe Haruo, *Nihon Marukusushugi Undo*, p. 161. A brief comparative study of the Japanese delegation appears in Koyama Hirotake, "Taisho," pp. 15-16.
32. See Communist International, *The First Congress*, pp. 3-5.
33. For the texts of the reports by Takase and Yoshida, presented under the pseudonyms of Yakiwa and Kato, respectively, see *Ibid.*, pp. 137-39. Japanese versions appear in Katsuyama, pp. 257-62. The reports have been reprinted with

some revisions in an article by Yamabe "Nihon Kindai Shi Kenkyu"). Watanabe Haruo's remarks are summarized from memory in *Katayama Sen*, pp. 113-14. In the article cited above, Yamabe charges that Watanabe did not speak (pp. 67-68). Watanabe denies the charge (see Watanabe Haruo and Koyama, pp. 103-4).

34. Shumiatsky, p. 5 (see note 25 above); cited in Eudin and North, p. 147. For a further account by the Moscow communists of the revolutionary situation in the East Asian countries and of the tasks ahead, see documents 70 through 73 in Eudin and North, pp. 221-31. There is a good brief account of the congress in Whiting, pp. 72-86.

35. Taguchi, *Akahata*, p. 109. In addition to this work and those of Tokuda and Watanabe cited above, there are a number of interesting personal accounts by Japanese delegates to the congress. See Katayama, "Doshi Renin"; Yoshida, "Renin Kaiken Ki" and *Dai San Internationale*; Taguchi, *Akai Hiroba* and "Shiberiya"; Suzuki Mosaburo, *Rono Russhiya* and *Aru Shakaishugisha*; Tokuda and Shiga, *Gokuchu Juhachinen*; and Wada Kiichiro, "Kokkyo Dasshutsu Ki."

36. *Pervyi Sezd*, pp. 8-28 (see note 24 above); cited in Eudin and North, pp. 224-25.

37. See Communist International, *The First Congress*, pp. 170-72, 198-99.

38. Katayama's speech is included in *ibid.*, pp. 120-36. A Japanese version appears in the Ministry of Justice's *Shiho Kenkyu*, December 1928, pp. 262-72, and in a collection of Katayama's writings, *Hansen Heiwa no Tame ni*, pp. 156-62. See also Katayama's article on the contemporary scene in Japan in *Inprecorr*, I, December 9, 1921, 122-23.

39. Communist International, *The First Congress*, pp. 172, 188-89. See also Watanabe Haruo, *Nihon Marukusushugi Undo*, pp. 172-74.

40. Takase, "Kakumei Sobieto," pp. 134-41.

41. Watanabe Haruo, *Nihon Marukusushugi Undo*, pp. 175 and 199, and *Katayama Sen*, pp. 121-22; Tokuda, "Sutarin," p. 5; Yamabe, "Nihon Kindai Shi Kenkyu."

42. For a brief description of the Eastern Workers Communist University, see Eudin and North, pp. 85-86. A convenient list of Japanese who studied there is included in Yamamoto and Arita, pp. 161-69.

43. Watanabe Haruo summarizes the fate of the "comrades" who returned to Japan in *Katayama Sen*, pp. 209-45.

44. *Zenei*, January 1922, p. 48.

45. Yamakawa, "Futsusenkyo."

46. Arahata, *Sa no Menmen*, pp. 170-71.

47. Takase, "Kyuyu Tokuda," p. 155; Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, p. 288.

48. Tateyama, pp. 100-105.

49. Yamakawa, "Musankaikyu Undo no Hokotenkan." This complete article also appears in a special issue on Yamakawa of *Shakaishugi*, October 1950, pp. 103-10.

50. Yamakawa, *Shakaishugi e*, pp. 199-200, and "Kyosanto," pp. 51-52; Arahata, *Kyosanto*, pp. 31-32.

51. For a discussion of this point, see Yamabe, "Koryo Mondai," p. 147.

52. Yamakawa, *Aru Bonjin*, p. 274, and his autobiography, *Yamakawa Hitoshi Jiden*, p. 274. The autobiography includes *Aru Bonjin no Kiroku*, as well as its continuation, *Zoku Aru Bonjin no Kiroku*, and the panel discussion appended to *Shakaishugi e no Michi wa Hitotsu de wa nai*.

53. Yamakawa, "Musankaikyu no Kyodo Sensen."

54. Carr, pp. 406-7; McKenzie, pp. 52-53.

CHAPTER 3

1. Court protocol of Kokuryo Goichiro; cited in Watanabe Yoshimichi, p. 131. See also Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 58-60, for an interesting account of communist activity in the labor movement, especially the meetings of young union members in the Tuesday Society (Kayokai).

2. Dore, *Land Reform in Japan*, p. 75.

3. Ohara Shakai, *Nihon Rodo Nenkan—1936*; cited in Scalapino's manuscript on the Japanese labor movement.

4. *Chishikijin no Seisei to Yakuwari* (The Creation and Role of Intellectuals), in *Kindai*, IV, 274-75.

5. Carr, III, 401-3.

6. For details about the Levelers' Society, see Totten and Wagatsuma, especially pp. 42-52.

7. *Protokoll des Vierten Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale, Petrograd-Moskau vom 5 November bis 5 December, 1922* (Hamburg, 1923), p. 51; cited in Eudin and North, p. 154. See also *Inprecorr*, II, December 2, 1922, 860.

8. *Inprecorr*, II, December 22, 1922, 990. See also Katayama's comments on the united front policy proposed at the congress in *ibid.*, December 5, 1922, 873-74.

9. According to Tateyama, the Japanese delegates did not bring any sort of draft platform with them (Tateyama, pp. 91-92). Yamabe has made the point that the basic theoretical concepts and practical policies of the platform had not been expressed by communist leaders in Japan, and that the Japanese communists were unable to make a comparable analysis of their country's economic and political conditions (Yamabe, "Koryo Mondai," pp. 118-21).

10. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 63.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 63, and Arahata, *Sa no Menmen*, pp. 170-71.

12. Tokuda, *Waga Omoide*, p. 163.

13. Tokuda and Shiga, pp. 35-36. There is reason to doubt that Tokuda went to Shanghai at the time he claimed.

14. McKenzie, pp. 96-97, 317.

15. *Nihon Rodo Nenkan—1924*, p. 605, and Tateyama, p. 110.

16. Our knowledge of the convention is based primarily on three sources: (1) the notes taken by Takase, later seized by the police, which are reproduced in part in Tateyama, pp. 112-21; (2) Takase's article "Hiwa—Daini no Taigyaku Jiken"; and (3) Kazama's book *Mosuko to Tsunagaru Nihon Kyosanto no Rekishi*, I, 103-5. Kazama's account is based largely on conversations with Takase and on Japanese court records.

17. In addition to Tateyama, pp. 117-18, see Sano Hiroshi, p. 98.

18. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 62. Tokuda has stated that on his return from the Far Eastern Peoples' Congress, he, Suzuki Mosaburo, and Yoshida debated this question, as well as that of the abolition of the armed forces, and that "nobody opposed the abolition of the imperial system and the establishment of a republic" (*Waga Omoide*, pp. 47ff). See also Suzuki Mosaburo, *Aru Shakaishugisha*, p. 129.

19. See Shinobu's account of the discussion regarding universal suffrage, based on Tokuda's court protocol, p. 985.

20. Yamakawa, "Hokotenkan to Sono Hihyo," especially pp. 54-59.

21. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 62.

22. Yamakawa, *Shakaishugi e*, p. 188.

23. *Nihon Rodo Nenkan—1927*, p. 444.

24. Takatsu, pp. 137–38.
25. According to the list compiled by the Society for the Scientific Study of Thought (see Shiso no Kagaku Kenkyukai, p. 89), Yamakawa and Suzuki Mosaburo were among the caretakers, but there is no evidence to substantiate this claim. Among those who escaped arrest were Takano Minoru, Aono, Hanaoka Kiyoshi, Nabeyama Sadachika, Nakamura Yoshiaki, Kokuryo Goichiro, Taniguchi Zentaro, Haniya Tamazo, Kishino Shigeo, Shiga, Kuroda, Hirabayashi Hatsunosuke, Asanuma, and Inamura (see Tanaka Sogoro, pp. 21–22, and Sekine, p. 55).
26. *Asahi Shinbun*, June 5 and June 6, 1923.
27. Yamakawa, “Shinbun ni,” pp. 193–96.
28. *Inprecorr*, III, July 23, 1923, 541.
29. *Rasshirennyi plenum Ispolnitelnogo Komiteta Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala*, 12–23 iyunia, 1923 . . . , pp. 30–31; cited in Eudin and North, p. 273.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 82; cited in Eudin and North, p. 224. There is a summary of his remarks in *Inprecorr*, III, June 22, 1923, 446, but the context is not clear. See also Arahata, *Kyosanto*, pp. 32–33.
31. Kyochokai, p. 622.
32. During this period, rumors were rife concerning plans of the Koreans and Chinese to riot and kill the Japanese. As a result, in many areas ex-servicemen and vigilante groups attacked these minorities. There was no official estimate of the number of Koreans and Chinese murdered, but one unofficial estimate was that some 3,000 Koreans and 300 Chinese lost their lives. See Shiga, *Nihon Kakumei Undo no Gunzo*, p. 92, and *Nihon Kakumei Undo Shi no Hitobito*, p. 155. For a recent account of the slaughter of the Koreans, see Kan Duig Sang, “Kanto Daishinsai ni Okeru Chosenjin Gyakusatsu” (The Korean Massacre During the Kanto Earthquake), *Rekishigaku Kenkyu* (Historical Studies), July 1963. A useful collection of materials is *Kanto Daishinsai to Chosenjin* (The Koreans and the Kanto Earthquake), *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, Vol. XVI (1963).
33. Until very recently Osugi’s career and thought has been largely ignored by Japanese historians, including those on the left. For an interesting discussion of this lacuna, see *Kindai Nihon*, pp. 42–46.
34. *Inprecorr*, III, October 18, 1923, 756–57. See also the appeal issued by the Profintern in the October 4, 1923, issue, p. 721, and Voitinsky’s analysis of the situation in Japan in the November 1, 1923, issue, p. 791.
35. *Ibid.*, II, November 29, 1922, 838–39.
36. Scalapino treats this subject in greater detail in his manuscript on the Japanese labor movement.
37. Yamakawa published his views regarding universal suffrage and political tactics for the proletariat in a number of articles and pamphlets that were reprinted in *Musankaikyu no Seiji Undo*. These include “Nihon ni Okeru Demokurashii no Hattatsu to Musankaikyu no Seiji Undo” (The Development of Democracy and the Political Movement of the Proletariat in Japan), pp. 178–248, which was later reprinted in 1925 as a pamphlet under the title “Musankaikyu Senjutsu no Kicho” (Bases of Proletarian Strategy); “Shin Keisei to Shin Hosaku” (The New Situation and the New Policy), pp. 249–62; and “Seiji Seiryoku no Bunpu to Musankaikyu no Seito” (The Distribution of Political Forces and the Political Party of the Proletariat), pp. 277–326.
38. Kishimoto, *Nihon Rodo Undo Shi*, pp. 169–71. There is another translation in Okochi, *Labor in Modern Japan*, pp. 50–51.
39. Arahata, *Kyosanto*, p. 44, and *Kanson Jiden*, pp. 431–38, 445. See also Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 74.
40. Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 80, 83.

41. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 75–77.
42. Shinobu, III, 1011.
43. Arahata, *Kyosanto*, p. 46.
44. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 79.
45. Arahata, interview with Scalapino on August 23, 1957; cited in Scalapino's manuscript on the Japanese labor movement. Yamakawa was probably in the Kansai area. In an October 12, 1957, interview with Scalapino, he claimed he was informed of the dissolution by Ichikawa.
46. Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, pp. 461–62.
47. Arahata, *Sa no Menmen*, pp. 172–73. Watanabe Masanosuke reached the same conclusion. See his "Waga Kuni Musankaikyu," p. 19. Ichikawa concluded that "the petty bourgeois leaders of the Japanese Communist Party simply avoided basic issues and prevented the subsequent development of the party." He also deplored the party leaders' failure to develop effective cells (Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 64–67). See also Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement*, p. 323n.

CHAPTER 4

1. Shea, pp. 85n, 131–45, analyzes Aono's role in cultural circles in some detail.
2. *Marukusushugi*, May 1924, p. 79.
3. See, for example, Inomata, "Kinyu Shihon," and Fukumoto, "Keizaigaku."
4. The controversy started when Shiga criticized Akamatsu's theory of "scientific Japanism" in the June issue of *Marxism* (Shiga, "Kagakuteki Nihonshugi"). Shiga was seeking to refute the views of the right-wing faction of Sodomei, which had been expressed in a series of articles written by Akamatsu (see Akamatsu, "Nihon Shihonshugi," "Waga Kuni Rodo Undo," "Kagakuteki Nihonshugi e," and "Waga Kuni Rodo Kumiai"). Akamatsu answered Shiga in another article ("Kagakuteki Nihonshugi no Riron"), but Shiga had the last word ("Futatabi").
5. Yamakawa, "Hokotenkan no Kikensei."
6. Yamakawa, "Musankaikyu Seito."
7. Totten, p. 6.
8. Kondo, pp. 217–18.
9. *Inprecorr*, IV, May 15, 1924, 291–92.
10. *Ibid.*, August 29, 1924, 647.
11. *Piatyi Vsemirnyi Kongress Kommunisticheskogo Internatsionala 17 Iiuna–8 Iiula 1924g. Stenograficheskii Otchet* (Fifth World Congress of the Communist International June 17–July 8, 1924. Stenographic Report) (Moscow and Lenin-grad, 1925), Part 1, p. 621; cited in Eudin and North, p. 275. See also *Inprecorr*, IV, July 24, 1924, 500.
12. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 129, and Ministry of Justice, "Waga Kuni," p. 39.
13. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 130–31, and Ministry of Justice, "Waga Kuni," p. 39.
14. Arahata, *Sa no Menmen*, p. 193.
15. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 148.
16. Scalapino treats the background to the split in Sodomei in great detail in his manuscript on the Japanese labor movement.
17. The adoption of this resolution was reported in the court protocol of Tokuda, cited in Watanabe Yoshimichi, Part 1, p. 128.
18. A text of the theses is cited as evidence in the preliminary court protocol of Tokuda Kyuichi and is included in *Teze Shu Dai Ichi* (Collection of Theses, Vol. I), edited by the Thought Division, Tokyo District Court. The text is also included in *Gendai Shi Shiryō*, XIV, 47–48.
19. Kyochokai, p. 231. According to Taniguchi, the figures were 12,500 and 13,100, respectively (Taniguchi, I, 93).

20. Taniguchi, I, 94, and Harada, pp. 199-200.
21. Tokunaga Sunao, who participated in the strike, used his experiences as the basis of a novel, *Taiyo no nai Machi* (Street Without Sun), which describes the activities of Japanese Communist Party members as well as the tactics of the employers and the police. For a discussion of this work, see Shea, pp. 280-84.
22. There is a detailed account of this strike in Taniguchi, I, 221-47.
23. See Shakai Keizai Rodo Kenkyujo, p. 62.
24. Yamamoto and Arita, pp. 134-35.
25. Kikukawa, pp. 273-75, 336-45.
26. For a list of those who were arrested, tried, and convicted, see *ibid.*, pp. 360-61.
27. Watanabe Yoshimichi, Part 1, pp. 128-29.
28. For Janson's role, see Nihon Shinbun Sha, pp. 157-60. Tokuda, Watanabe, Kitaura, and Sano Fumio also visited Janson at the Russian Embassy to get instructions and funds for the party.
29. Arahata, *Kyosanto*, p. 50.
30. See Home Ministry, *Showa 1928*, p. 39.
31. Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 90-94.
32. For the texts of the August 1925 theses and slogans, see *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 46, and for the texts on which they are based, see Ministry of Justice, "Kominterun," p. 358.
33. Yamakawa continued to give his encouragement and support to the formation of a single, united front proletarian party (see Yamakawa, "Musun Seito").
34. Suzuki Mosaburo, "Seiji Kenkyukai," pp. 319-20.
35. Shiga had developed some of the points in Sano's platform in detail in his attempt to refute Akamatsu's argument that communist policy must be based on conditions in Japan. Like Sano, Shiga linked Japanese imperialism to world imperialism. "The essential nature of imperialism does not lie in the national economy but in the world economy," he asserted. "A specific capitalist country is . . . only a link in an international chain." Akamatsu, Shiga said, had virtually ignored this fact. "He rarely mentions Japanese imperialism in its relation with international capitalism. . . . He does not understand the principle inherent in the world system." Shiga also attacked Akamatsu on the question of the proletarian movement joining the reform movement. Akamatsu thought that socialism could be reached through liberalism, but Shiga regarded liberalism in the period of imperialism as "a rusty lance in the hands of a Don Quixote." "Once capitalism reaches the stage of imperialism, liberalism becomes a dream of the good old days. . . . Liberalism is only a fairy tale" (Shiga, "Kagakuteki Nihonshugi").
- Terming Shiga "ignorant of the realities of contemporary Japan" (possibly because he was influenced by "foreign books"), Akamatsu responded to Shiga's criticism by continuing to insist on the necessity of passing through a period of liberalism on the road to socialism. Akamatsu asserted that Shiga interpreted liberalism as it applied to a normal imperialist state, not as it applied to "a particular imperialist state like our country." Akamatsu maintained that the proletarian party would see as its "unavoidable, immediate task" the adoption of a "positive attitude" toward liberalism, and argued that the establishment of "liberalistic policies" would greatly contribute to the "consolidation and expansion" of the proletariat. . . . "By passing through this inevitable stage . . . our proletariat will move steadily to its final victory" (Akamatsu, "Kagakuteki Nihonshugi no Riron," especially pp. 34-36 and 39-40). Shiga conceded the need for reforms in a later article (Shiga, "Futatabi," p. 37).
36. Yamabe, "Koryo Mondai," July 1957, p. 125.
37. Scalapino, manuscript on the Japanese labor movement.

38. Royama Masamichi, ed., *Musanseito Ron* (Treatises on Proletarian Parties) (1930), p. 432; cited in Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement*, p. 330n.

39. Harada, pp. 208–9.

40. Yamakawa criticized the decision and appealed to the left wing not to make concessions to the right-wing labor unions (“Rodo Nominto to Sayoku”).

41. The platform declared that the Social Democratic Party opposed “the radical parties, which ignore the processes of social evolution.” It proposed implementation of universal suffrage, abolition of laws restricting civil liberties, enactment of legislation for social welfare and for the protection of laborers and tenant farmers, abolition of legal and economic discrimination against women, reform of the Diet and of the military, educational, and fiscal systems, nationalization of key industries, and adoption of a peace policy. (Royama, pp. 455–62 [see note 38 above]; cited in Scalapino, *Democracy and the Party Movement*, p. 332n.)

42. “Worker-administrative” is a term used by Scalapino to characterize Nishio and Matsuoka. Scalapino, manuscript on the Japanese labor movement.

43. Totten, p. 134.

CHAPTER 5

1. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 157.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 159; see also Ministry of Education, No. 24, p. 96.

3. Tokyo District Court, *Kyosanto Jiken*, p. 193.

4. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 165–66.

5. Says Fukumoto, “Nishi Masao told me that although *Marxism* previously had a sluggish circulation of less than 1,000 copies, it had increased rapidly to over 3,000 copies in 1925 and 1926, when I eagerly began to contribute articles every month. . . . I formally joined the communist group in the spring of 1926, shortly after my arrival in Tokyo, and began to work as a member of the group’s leadership. There were no more than ten members in all. However, by November 1926, there were well over 100 members” (Fukumoto, *Kakumei Undo Razo*, pp. 56–57).

6. Fukumoto, “Hokotenkan to Shihon,” p. 24, and “Rono Seito,” p. 10.

7. Fukumoto “Tomen no Ninmu,” p. 32.

8. Fukumoto, “Rono Seito,” pp. 12–14.

9. Fukumoto, “Oshu ni Okeru,” pp. 98, 103–4, and “Hokotenkan wa Ikanaru,” pp. 18–21ff.

10. Fukumoto, “Tomen no Ninmu,” p. 28, and “Rironteki,” pp. 17–18.

11. Fukumoto, “Tomen no Ninmu,” pp. 31–32.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 33.

13. Fukumoto, “Yamakawa Shi,” I, 12–13, 18–19, 30–33.

14. Fukumoto, “Rodo Seito,” p. 17.

15. Fukumoto, “Yamakawa Shi,” II, 18–20.

16. Yamakawa “Chukanha.”

17. Yamakawa, “Rodo Nominto to Sayoku.”

18. Fukumoto, “Rironteki,” pp. 18, 21.

19. Fukumoto, “Sayoku Chukanha.”

20. Yamakawa’s “left-wing advance” was attacked by Fukumoto in the November 1926 issue of *Marxism* (see Fukumoto, “Ronoto,” especially pp. 29–31). Yamakawa never answered this attack directly, but his article in the December 1926 issue of *Kaizo*, “Musankaikyū Seiji Sensen no Konran,” was regarded as a special challenge by Fukumoto, who wrote: “The ‘left-wing advance appeal’ means that [while formerly Yamakawa’s] eclecticism opposed us unwittingly, . . . [now he] has become opposed to us consciously” (Fukumoto, “Iwayuru Setchushugi”). Yama-

kawa's last contribution to *Marxism* was in October; a year later he became affiliated with *The Masses*.

21. See Home Ministry, *Showa* 1928, pp. 29-30.

22. See Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 174, for comments on Tokuda; and Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, p. 103, on Watanabe. See also Tokuda, "Hiyorimi-shugi."

23. According to government sources, the original statement and a party constitution were destroyed on the spot (see Home Ministry, *Showa* 1928, p. 29). The discussion in the text is based upon a summary in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 63-65. It appeared originally in a mimeographed publication of the Home Ministry entitled *Himitsu Kessha Nihon Kyosanto Kenkyo Jokyo* (The Arrest of the Secret Japanese Communist Party) (July 1929), pp. 21ff. See also the statement by Sano Fumio cited in the Tokyo District Court's *Kyosanto Jiken*, pp. 214-17.

24. Ayakawa, pp. 32-33.

25. Tokyo District Court, *Nihon Kyosanto Soshiki*; cited in Durkee, p. 86.

26. The political theses were distributed to the conference participants as a secret paper. A summary, originally published by the Home Ministry in 1929, appears in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 66-67.

27. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 170, citing the court testimony of Mitamura Shiro.

28. See Watanabe Masanosuke's article "Waga Kuni Rodo," which was based on the "Theses on the Labor Union Movement" adopted at Goshiki. Watanabe later asserted that the split was a defeat for the communists (see Watanabe Masanosuke, "Waga Kuni Musankaikyu"). Tokuda, who also came to support Fukumoto after his release from prison, reached the same conclusion (Tokuda and Shiga, p. 51).

29. This point is emphasized in Fukumoto's article "Rono Seito to Rodo Kumiai."

30. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 161-63.

31. Taniguchi, II, 238ff.

32. Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, p. 477.

33. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 173-74; Tateyama, pp. 171-74; and Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, p. 480.

34. Kitaura, "Anchi-Fukumotoism." See also Kitaura, "Fukumotoism." Kitaura was the first person to use the term "Fukumotoism."

35. See the special edition of *Shakai Kagaku* (*Social Science*) published in August 1927 under the title "Riron Toso Hihan" (Criticism of Theoretical Struggles). See also the May 1927 issue of *Kaiho*, in which some anarchist writers mocked Fukumoto and others attacked him.

36. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 172. The boycott of Janson by Fukumoto and his supporters was another point that had disturbed Kitaura. Arahata claims that he himself was warned by Sano Fumio and Ichikawa not to meet the Comintern representative (Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, pp. 478-79). Fukumoto asserts that Janson was disturbed by his view that Japanese capitalism was "joining the collapse of world capitalism" (Fukumoto, *Kakumei Undo Razo*, pp. 81-83).

37. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 104, 111-12.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

39. According to Kazama, Janson told Sano that Arahata had promised "to obey unconditionally the decisions on the Japanese question to be discussed and approved by the Comintern at Moscow," and asked him to make the same promise. To this Sano is reported to have replied: "The Comintern has not yet given a theoretical solution to the Japanese question, and I should like it to do so, by

all means. In that case, I will unconditionally follow such decisions, too" (Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 174–75).

40. Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, p. 148.

41. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 183.

42. *Ibid.*, 183–85; and Arahata, *Kyosanto*, p. 53.

43. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 184. Ichikawa says that among the Japanese delegates who went to Moscow, there were "worker elements" and "petty bourgeois elements" (evidently including Tokuda). "In the course of discussion," he writes, "a certain worker group sprang up as a faction . . . with Watanabe Masanosuke as its representative leader" (Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, p. 110). Fukumoto later asserted that there had been a feud between Watanabe and Tokuda that developed into a struggle for power at Moscow. He also said that opposition to Tokuda might have been the reason for the early convening of the Goshiki convention (Fukumoto, "Jitsuroku," November 1957, p. 89). However, Nakao denied there was a power struggle: "Comrades Watanabe Masanosuke, Nabeyama Sadachika, Kawai Etsuzo, and myself took joint action because we shared the same views on Japanese problems. . . . These circumstances have been interpreted as a personal struggle for power or competition for leadership. . . . It is a mistake, however, to regard the difference among the delegates as a factional feud, for the matter was completely political" (*Tenko*, p. 161; see also Fukumoto, *Kakumei Undo Razo*, pp. 101–14). According to Fukumoto, Murphy called Tokuda an "international charlatan" (p. 113).

44. Katsuyama, p. 290.

45. Nakao later stated that a central committee meeting was held on the evening that Tokuda and Fukumoto arrived in Moscow and that it was decided to oust Sano Fumio, who was still to arrive, from the central committee because he had "acted in such a way as to disqualify him from membership." However, Nakao said that he could not remember details of the meeting. According to the same source, Fukumoto resigned not because of the "fallacy of his theory," but because "he had so hastily changed his views at the front door of the Comintern" (*Tenko*, pp. 161–62).

46. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 187. The Comintern made recommendations for candidate members as follows: Kawada Kenji, Matsuo Naoyoshi, Kasuga Shojiro, Fujii Tetsuo, Tokuda Eiji, Takahashi Sadaki, Soma Ichiro, Kawai Etsuzo, and Murao Satsuo.

47. Taniguchi, II, 258, 262.

48. Taniguchi maintains that if the Diet dissolution petition campaign had not been "adversely affected by Fukumotoism" and if it had been led by the Japanese Communist Party, "the organization of our proletariat would have become deeper among the masses" (*ibid.*, p. 265). He had a tendency to exaggerate, as indicated by the following comments: "The financial panic of 1927 marked an historic and revolutionary moment, indicating the climax of the crisis of Japanese capitalism on the eve of the second world war of imperialism. Accordingly, the mass struggle at that time should and could have been directed toward a revolution. . . . But the struggle did not go so far. One important reason was that the Japanese working class had not yet been trained for a revolution to that extent, but more important, there was not that much resolution on the part of the Japanese Communist Party. The party did not have its own activities and organization, and could not work effectively at that revolutionary moment." Taniguchi is no doubt correct in emphasizing the deficiencies of the communists and thus the lack of subjective conditions, but his description of a revolutionary crisis exaggerated the nature of the objective situation. He overlooked the simple fact that a majority of workers

and peasants remained unorganized and loyal, for various reasons, to the regime in power (*ibid.*, p. 331).

49. Yamamoto and Arita, pp. 131-32.

50. Musansha Shinbun Sha, pp. 188ff, 206-9, 201-3.

51. Asano, especially pp. 7off.

52. Murayama, especially pp. 62-63.

53. Ichikawa, "Rodo."

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

55. Sano Manabu, "Seijiteki Jiyu," pp. 121, 132-33, and 140-41; and Shiga, "Waga Musankaikyu," p. 12.

56. The October 1926 issue of *Marxism* was a special edition devoted to criticism of the journal *The Masses*. It included the articles by Yamakawa and Fukumoto that were critical of the centrists.

57. Inomata, "Waga Kuni Shihonshugi Antei."

58. Inomata, "Waga Kuni Shihonshugi no Gendankai."

59. Inomata, "Gendai Nihon Burujoaji."

60. Inomata, "Nihon Musankaikyu Undo." Also see Aono. After his break with the communist bureau, Aono had joined the Society for the Study of Politics.

61. Others in the *Rono* publishing circle were Kobori Jinji, Inamura Junzo, Okada Soji, Omori Yoshitaro, Ito Yoshimichi, Sakisaka Itsuro, Takahashi Masao, Abe Isamu, Arisawa Hiromi, Honda Kenzo, Ishihama Tomoyuki, Kushida Tamizo, Ouchi Hyoe, Ryu Shintaro, Sasa Hiroo, Tsuchiya Takao, Tsushima Tadayuki, and Uno Kozo.

62. Yamakawa, "Seijiteki," and Inomata, "Nihon Musankaikyu no Ippan." See also an article by Arahata in the same issue (Arahata, "Sekutoshugi") in which he accused the communists—"the extreme leftist faction"—of attempting to block publication of the translation of the Comintern-written platform. He did not, of course, mention the criticism of Yamakawism in the 1927 theses.

CHAPTER 6

1. See Tokyo District Court, *Nihon Kyosanto Chian*, pp. 40-41, and Ministry of Justice, *Shiho Kenkyu*, December 1935, p. 226.

2. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, p. 118. Shiga later referred to Watanabe as the "secretary-general" (Shiga, *Nihon Kakumei Undo Shi no Hitobito*, p. 202).

3. It is believed that it was Watanabe who prepared the document "Hokoku no Yoten" (Main Points of the Report) in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 68-83, to be used to explain the 1927 theses to party members. The text in *Gendai* is based on one published by the Home Ministry. According to Ichikawa, the members of the new central committee visited all the cells to report on the theses and endeavored to get all party members to put them into practice. He states that "the worker-fighters, who constituted an overwhelming majority of party members and who were experienced in struggles against the bourgeoisie, passionately supported the theses" and eagerly went into factories, where they worked to put the theses into practice (Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, p. 117).

4. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 119, 204-6.

5. *Sekki* (February 1, 1928), I, 5.

6. The text is included under the title "Political Theses" in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 96-106.

7. "Waga Kuni Shihonshugi no Josei to Rodo Kumiai no Ippanteki Ninmu" (The Conditions of Capitalism and the General Tasks of Labor Unions in Our Country); in Taniguchi, II, 438-39, and in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 103.

8. *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 103.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 103-4.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 104.
11. Sano Manabu, "Rekishi Katei," pp. 24-26.
12. Watanabe Masanosuke, "Waga Kuni Musankaikyū." In this article, Watanabe reviewed the development of the left-wing movement in Japan since World War I and pointed out weaknesses in it, attributing most of them to Yamakawism, or "eclecticism," and to Fukumotoism.
13. Fukumoto, "Waga Puroretariato."
14. Watanabe Masanosuke, "Ippan Senryaku." See also his article "Senryaku Mondai."
15. Sano Manabu, "Rekishi Katei," pp. 41-52.
16. Prefectural assembly elections had been held under the new law in the autumn of 1927. The four legal proletarian parties ran some 206 candidates out of a total of 2,644; they won only 28 of the 1,485 seats. The total proletarian party vote was 255,000 out of 6,296,104 ballots cast. The Labor-Farmer Party, which put up the most candidates (105), had 13 winners and 115,000 votes (*Nihon Rodo Nenkan 1928*, p. 303; cited by Scalapino in his manuscript on the Japanese labor movement). Scalapino concludes "given the nature of their organizational capabilities, the proletarian parties had run too many candidates."
17. *Sekki* (February 1, 1928), I, 7-8, and (February 15, 1928), I, 11-12.
18. *Sekki* (February 15, 1928), I, 12.
19. For example, see "Sosenkyo no Hihan to Gikai Kodo no Gensoku" (Criticism of the General Election and the Principle of Parliamentary Activity) in *Sekki* (March 1, 1928), I, 15-17.
20. *Sekki* (February 15, 1928), I, 9.
21. *Inprecorr*, VI, February 2, 1928, 129-30.
22. *Rodo*, March 1928, pp. 4-5; cited by Scalapino in his manuscript on the Japanese labor movement. *Nihon Rodo Nenkan 1929*, p. 320, also cited by Scalapino, gives slightly different figures:

Party	Candidates	Elected	Votes
Labor-Farmer	40	2	192,552
Japan Labor-Farmer	13	1	86,992
Social Democratic	17	4	114,969
Japan Farmer	12	0	45,317
Local Parties	7	1	46,617
Total	89	8	486,501

23. For the role of labor and the peasantry in the election, see Totten, pp. 292, 318-24, and 341-45.
24. The quotations in this paragraph are from "Rono Ippa ni Taisuru Waga To no Taido wo Seimei Su" (Explaining Our Party's Attitude Toward the Labor-Farmer Faction), *Sekki* (March 1, 1928), I, 19-20.
25. See Home Ministry, *Shakai Undo*, pp. 44-44b.
26. Arahata, *Kanson Jiden*, pp. 485-87.
27. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 210-13.
28. *Sekki* (March 22, 1928), I, 25-26, 29.
29. Kita, p. 43.
30. Cited in Swearingen and Langer, p. 31.
31. Cited in Tateyama, pp. 3-4.
32. Swearingen and Langer, p. 33.
33. Aso, pp. 85-86.
34. Yamakawa, "Fukumen," pp. 87-88.
35. Oyama, p. 97.
36. *Rodo Nomin Shinbun*, March 30, 1928.

37. Swearingen and Langer, pp. 32–33.
38. Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, p. 138.
39. Nabeyama, “Kumiai,” pp. 58–60.
40. Kyochokai, pp. 253–55.
41. Taniguchi, II, 463.
42. Totten, pp. 345–46.
43. *Inprecorr*, VIII, April 26, 1928, 459.
44. For a list of Japanese trainees at Kutobe, descriptions of their life in the Soviet Union, and their activities in Japan upon their return, see Yamamoto and Arita, pp. 185–91; Home Ministry, *Showa 1928*, pp. 263–66; and Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 195–99. The Ministry of Justice publication is based on court protocols for the period to 1928 and on the annual *Showa 19—nenju ni Okeru Shakai Undo no Jokyo* after 1928. Kazama has provided an interesting account of his personal experiences (*Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*). The returnees found it difficult to operate effectively in Japan, largely because of police pressure and their own unfamiliarity with the Japanese scene. Many were arrested shortly after their return.
45. *Inprecorr*, VIII, June 14, 1928, 617–18. A complete Japanese translation appeared in *Marxism*, August 1928, pp. 61–65 and is included in two Japanese Communist Party publications (*Kominterun*, pp. 38–44, and *Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 50–57). See also Yamamoto Kenzo. Yamamoto was in Shanghai, where he was in contact with Comintern agents and the Pan-Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat.
46. *Inprecorr*, VIII, May 24, 1928, 518–19.
47. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 122–23.

CHAPTER 7

1. McKenzie, p. 120.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 74–75, 78.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
4. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 207, and Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 227–28.
5. Kishimoto *et al.*, p. 310.
6. *Inprecorr*, VIII, August 11, 1928, 851–52.
7. *Ibid.*, November 23, 1928, 1576.
8. *Ibid.*, September 11, 1928, pp. 1082–83. The Japanese version is found in the Japanese Communist Party publication *Kokuryo*, pp. 91–97. What is supposed to be a stenographic record of a speech by Ichikawa on “Problems of Colonies” is included in the Japanese Communist Party’s *Ichikawa Shoichi Chosaku Shu*, pp. 177–84. However, the text is that of a speech by Takahashi Sadaki.
9. Takahashi demonstrated the knowledge of theory that he had gained at the Lenin Institute in a speech to the general session on August 16. The text appears in *Inprecorr*, VIII, October 17, 1928, 1311–13.
10. *Ibid.*, December 12, 1928, 1671.
11. For a summary of these discussions based on the preliminary court protocol of Sano Manabu, see Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 207–10. See also Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 144–45.
12. The text of this document, known as the “October theses” or the “1928 theses,” appeared in *Marxism*, December 1928–January 1929, pp. 70–86, under the title “Nihon no Puroretaria [to] Tomen no Ninmu” (Immediate Tasks of the Japanese Proletariat). The document was also issued as a pamphlet, “Nihon Kyosanto Tomen Kinkyu no Ninmu” (Present Urgent Tasks of the Japanese Communist Party), in December 1928.
13. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 210.

14. Sano's exposition of policy appeared originally in the German edition of *Inprecorr* and was published in Japan in January 1929 as a pamphlet (see Sano Manabu, "Nihon Puroretaria," especially pp. 21-22).
15. "Nihon no Puroretaria," pp. 73-78 (see note 12 above).
16. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 209.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 210.
18. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 123-26, 189-90.
19. According to financial statements of the party, Ichikawa received 750 yen at Shanghai and 5,500 yen and 512 dollars in Tokyo between November 1928 and March 1929; cited in Home Ministry, *Showa 1929*, pp. 84-85.
20. Kyochokai, p. 637.
21. For details regarding the merger, see Kyochokai, pp. 630-34.
22. For details on Zenkyo leaders, see Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, pp. 202-6. See also Watanabe Toru.
23. *Rodo Shinbun*, January 30, 1929; cited in Scalapino's manuscript on the Japanese labor movement.
24. *Rodo Shinbun*, December 24, 1928; cited by Scalapino in his manuscript on the Japanese labor movement.
25. Mitamura Shiro (Pseud. Koizumi Yasutaro), "Strikes and Strike Tactics," *Rodo Shinbun*, January 9, 1929; cited by Scalapino in his manuscript on the Japanese labor movement.
26. The text appears in *Inprecorr*, IX, January 18, 1929, 69.
27. Ministry of Justice, *Shiho Kenkyu*, December 1935, p. 236.
28. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 263, 240. See also Home Ministry, *Showa 1929*, p. 90.
29. See Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 230; based on Maniwa Suekichi's preliminary court protocol.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 231. The communist fractions in the mass organizations were as follows: Labor-Farmer League—Sugimoto, Fukutomi Masao, Akizasa Masanosuke; Zenkyo—Ito Tamotsu, Nishimura Saiki, Kobayashi Naoe, Yoshida Sukeharu; Japan Masses Party—Sunaya Hajime, Kurokawa Yasuichi; Preparatory Association for an Antiwar League—Hashimoto Nobuaki, Suzuki Kohei.
31. Sano Manabu, "Nihon Puroretaria," pp. 6-7.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
33. Takahashi, "Minshuteki Surogan." Takahashi also used the pen name Nagata Konosuke.
34. Takahashi, "Nihon no Seiji Keizai."
35. See the preface in Takahashi, *Nihon Puroretariato*, p. 2. This work is a collection of Takahashi's articles in *Marxism*, *The Proletarian News*, and *Labor News*.
36. *Inprecorr*, IX, January 3, 1929, 12-13.
37. Home Ministry, *Showa 1929*, p. 91, and Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 242-43. At the time of the arrests, there were party members who suspected that Maniwa was a police agent.
38. Home Ministry, *Showa 1929*, pp. 90-92, and Tateyama, pp. 298-99.
39. Kazama, *Mosuko to Tsunagaru*, I, 247-51.
40. Totten, p. 347.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 474.
42. Yamamoto and Arita, p. 201.
43. Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, pp. 54-55.
44. Watanabe Toru, p. 121.

45. Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, p. 116, and *Showa 1931*, p. 82.
46. Kawai, "Kanso" (Thoughts), a note dated April 17, 1929, quoted in *Tenko*, p. 153. An earlier note, "Boku ga Nihon Kyosanto yori Datto wo Ketsuishi Jihaku Suru ni Itaru Katei" (The Process by Which I Decided to Withdraw from the Japanese Communist Party and Confess to the Authorities), dated March 22, 1929, is also mentioned in *Tenko*, p. 4, but the text is not quoted.
47. Murayama summarized his ideas in a paper entitled "To no Hihan" (Criticism of the Party), which he had circulated among his ex-comrades in jail. See Tateyama, p. 332.
48. Mizuno outlined his views in a document dated May 23, 1929, entitled "Nihon Kyosanto Datto ni Saishi Toin Shokun ni" (To Party Members on the Occasion of Withdrawing from the Japanese Communist Party), cited and summarized in *Tenko*, pp. 152-57.
49. Mizuno Shigeo, "Kukyo no Aji," p. 151.
50. Yamamoto and Arita, p. 374.
51. Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, p. 117. For the reaction of another defector, Kawamura Tsuneichi, to the views of Mizuno and Kawai, see *Tenko*, p. 161, 12n.
52. Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, pp. 77-81, and *Tenko*, p. 157.
53. The communist position was stated in the January 12, 1929, issue of the Labor-Farmer League's organ *Labor-Farmer News*: "Under the existing relations between the ruling and ruled classes, all bodies of the latter class are deprived of legality. If any group seeks to remain legal, it is bound to become much the same as the social democratic parties, which betray and cheat the masses of workers and peasants." See also Totten, p. 188.
54. *Inprecorr*, X, January 23, 1930, pp. 72-73.
55. Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, pp. 67-68.
56. Yamamoto and Arita, p. 203. The police put the total at 100 in 23 cells at the time of the February 1930 general election. Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, p. 63.
57. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 247-49, and Yamamoto and Arita, p. 120. Hirano Yoshitaro and Yamada Moritaro of Tokyo Imperial University, Kobayashi Ryosei of Hosei University, and the writer Yamada Seisaburo were among the contributors to the party.
58. Those who attended the meeting were Tanaka, Sano Fumio, Maeno, Kawasaki Tateo and Kato Sadakichi (both from Tokyo), Saito Takeshi and Annaka Hisahiro (from Kanagawa), Yamamoto Kumeki (from Osaka), Abe Yoshimi (from Kobe), Munetake Goro, and Tanaka's wife, Komiyama Hideko.
59. Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, pp. 56, 99-100.
60. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 240-43. See also Ministry of Education, No. 24, p. 103.
61. *Daini Musansha Shinbun*, December 24, 1929, and January 11, 1930. For material on the league, see Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, pp. 169ff.
62. Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, pp. 118-19.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 59; Ministry of Education, No. 18, p. 53; Watanabe Toru, p. 138.
64. *Daini Musansha Shinbun*, December 24, 1929; also Watanabe Toru, p. 142.
65. *Inprecorr*, X, February 13, 1930, 119-20.
66. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 269.
67. Mitamura, pp. 178-81. See also Watanabe Toru, pp. 134-36.
68. Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, pp. 138-39.
69. For the full text of the instructions, see Ministry of Justice, Research Section, March 1935, pp. 111-18.
70. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 278.

71. Evidently the local Youth League committee had plans to destroy the facilities of the Japan Petroleum Company and to storm the Tsurumi Police Station. *Ibid.*, pp. 279-80.

72. For a list of other Kutobe trainees who returned and were arrested during this period, see Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, p. 146.

73. According to a confession made by Tanaka in *ibid.*, p. 57, appointments were made as follows: central committee—Tanaka (chairman), Iwao, Imamoto; candidate members—Kamihagihara Kageo and Yamamoto (in Russia); department chiefs—Tanaka (organization), Iwao and Tanaka (labor unions), Imamoto and Saito Hisao (agitation-propaganda), Iwao (youth and women), Imamoto and Kamihagihara (techniques, publications).

74. Iwao Iesada (Pseud. Kanda Tetsuo), "Borushebiki To no Saiken to Kyokusateki Keiko ni Taisuru Toso no Kyumu" (The Urgent Need for the Struggle to Reconstruct the Bolshevik Party and To Fight Extreme Left-Wing Tendencies), *Daini Musansha Shinbun*, June 11, 1930.

75. Hori Utaro, "Zenkyo Sokumen Shi" (A Side History of Zenkyo), *Rodosha*, May 1949; cited in Watanabe Toru, p. 147.

76. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 281.

77. Tanaka Seigon; cited in Swearingen and Langer, p. 197. See also Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, p. 142.

78. *Daini Musansha Shinbun*, February 25, 1931 and May 20, 1931.

79. For a summary of the Profintern statements, see *Daini Musansha Shinbun*, September 24, 1930. The Young Communist International statement appears in *Inprecorr*, X, June 12, 1930, 532. Zenkyo later blamed its participation in the disturbances on a spy, or police agent, named Kamiya Toshiro. *Rodo Shinbun*, October 25, 1932; cited in Watanabe Toru, p. 141.

80. For a summary of police action, see Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 257-58.

81. *Ibid.*, p. 259, and Yamamoto and Arita, pp. 329-30.

82. Yamamoto and Arita, p. 367.

83. In addition to Konno and Minami, the delegation included Kurahara Korehito (interpreter), Oi Masashi metal industry, Iizuka Hiroshi, two seamen—Kiyozumi and Honda—and the two women—Iijima Kimi (spinning industry) and Kodama Shizuko (chemical industry). Home Ministry, *Showa 1930*, p. 147, and Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, pp. 262, 266, and 268.

CHAPTER 8

1. Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, pp. 270-71.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 268, 270.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 277.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 285-86.

5. Volk's theses are included in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 400-08. They appeared originally in *Kommunistische Internationale*. He made much the same analysis in a treatise on Japanese capitalism that appeared in the August 20, 1931, issue of *Pravda*.

6. Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, pp. 281-82.

7. Red International, pp. 141-51.

8. Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, pp. 280-81. See also Miyagawa. Miyagawa had an opportunity to read an unpublished account that Kazama prepared in jail after he was arrested in 1932.

9. Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, pp. 283–84.
10. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 289, and Ministry of Education, No. 24, p. 104.
11. “Appeal to All Revolutionary Workers, Peasants, and Tenant Farmers Throughout the Country on the Occasion of the Opening of the 59th Session of the Diet,” *Daini Musansha Shinbun*, January 12, 1931.
12. Shiga Yoshio, writing much later, when the “draft political theses” had been declared “Trotskyist” by the Comintern and Sano Manabu had renounced the party, claimed that Sano was the first to bring back this “heretical theory” to Japan and that in prison he confirmed it as the view of the Comintern (Shiga, *Nihon Kakumei Undo Shi no Hitobito*, p. 35). During the trial of the communist leaders in 1931, Sano denied this, declaring: “We were to hold a convention of the Japanese Communist Party around April 16, 1929, when we were to discuss in detail new prospects of revolution. But this became impossible because of the April 16 round-up. I was then planning to report and engage in discussion at a party convention scheduled for November, but unfortunately I was arrested. . . . I pointed out that it was not proper to propose a change regarding the prospect of revolution from within jail.” Yet, according to Sano, although he recognized that the July [1927] theses had been correct, he expected that they would be further developed. His view was that the revolution would be “a proletarian revolution including a wide scope of tasks of a bourgeois-democratic revolution.” See the extra edition of *Puroretaria Kagaku*, November 1931, entitled “Nihon Kyosanto Kohan Toso Bocho Ki Go” (Special Edition—Audience Record of the Japanese Communist Party Trial Struggle), p. 53.
13. Nosaka has described his flight from Japan in *Bomei 16-nen* (pp. 11–13). See also “Fusetsu Gojunen,” pp. 116–18. In March 1930 Nosaka was released from prison for a month to have an eye operation. He remained in the hospital much longer because of other ailments. While in the hospital, he was contacted by the party’s central committee and ordered to proceed to the Soviet Union to work with the Comintern. During his recuperatory period, he disarmed the police by his friendly and “honest” attitude, and they relaxed their surveillance. Finally, in March 1931, Nosaka left Kobe by night train for Moji, where he joined his wife and boarded a ship for Dairen in the guise of a merchant. From Dairen he traveled overland to Vladivostok.
14. Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, pp. 285–86; Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 135–36; and Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, p. 134.
15. Totten, pp. 327–28.
16. *Sekki* (June 15, 1931), I, 137–38.
17. *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 403–4.
18. “Seiji Tese Soan in Taisuru Sano, Nabeyama, Ichikawara no Iken” (Views of Sano, Nabeyama, Ichikawa, and Others on the Draft Political Theses), transcribed from two undated mimeographed sheets prepared by the Home Ministry, in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 485–87.
19. *Sekki* (November 1, 1931), II, 40–42.
20. Inomata Tsunao, “Senryaku Mondai.”
21. Inomata, “Marukusushugi.”
22. Konno Yojiro later wrote that the party was “firmly united around factory cells, which displayed sufficient vitality to act independently each time contact with a higher body was cut off. The cells survived to influence, at their own discretion, workers and others around them” (Konno, p. 12).
23. The May 17, 1931, issue of *Red Flag* announced the following recruiting policy: “(1) The party will accept all revolutionary workers who want to be mem-

bers under the present murderous conditions. However, there should be strict investigation to determine if the applicant is a spy. (2) The party has often been uprooted because it was too small. If we have a party of 10,000 or 100,000 members instead of only 100 or 200, we cannot be uprooted, no matter how much the Japanese bourgeoisie prides itself on its highly developed police network, with its spies. To defend the party, our policy should be to organize and expand it boldly on a broad basis and not to shrink in size because of the long tradition of hardship and factionalism. (3) Revolutionary workers should not wait until they are discovered by a party organizer. They should organize cells in factories on their own initiative; the organizer can then identify, by looking at the struggle they conduct, those workers he can accept into the party. (4) At factories where there are branches of Zenkyo, party cells should be formed immediately. (5) The organizers on the local, district, and cell levels—and all party members—must implement the policy of popularizing the party repeatedly set forth by the central organization. Extreme left-wing deviation and factionalism in recruiting practices should cease. Increase the membership to 10,000” (*Sekki*, I, 112).

24. Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, pp. 102-3, 120-23.

25. See the resolution approved by Zenkyo's central committee, “The Urgent Tasks of the Revolutionary Labor Unions,” in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XV, 358-63.

26. *Sekki*, January 25, 1931, I. See also *Rodo Shinbun*, March 18, 1931, a special issue that included the resolution of Zenkyo's central committee cited in note 25.

27. Watanabe Toru, pp. 201-4.

28. *Sekki* (May 31, 1931), I, 127-28.

29. Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, pp. 127-28.

30. *Sekki* (March 25, 1931), I, 65-67.

31. Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, p. 259.

32. *Sekki* (June 15, 1931), I, 139-42.

33. *Ibid.* (March 25, 1931), I, 70-71.

34. Swearingen and Langer, p. 54.

35. Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, pp. 47-50; Totten, p. 350.

36. Home Ministry, *Kyosanshugi Undo no Gaikan* (Outline of the Communist Movement) (Tokyo, 1934); cited in Swearingen and Langer, p. 54.

37. Shea, pp. 69-92, 127-52, 198-233.

38. Uyehara, pp. 296-97. See also Shea, pp. 234-74.

39. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 348-57.

40. Tokuda and Shiga, pp. 57-58.

41. Shiga, *Nihon Kakumei Undo Shi no Hitobito*, p. 36.

42. Nabeyama and Sano, pp. 86-87.

43. Suzuki Takeshi, pp. 123-24, 129. See also Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 138-39.

44. Suzuki Takeshi, p. 124.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

46. For a compilation that includes the questions put by the judge and the answers of the defendants, see Tamaki.

47. *Sekki* (June 15, 1931), I, 146; *Rodo Shinbun*, June 25, 1931; and *Daini Musansha Shinbun*, July 3, 1931.

48. *Daini Musansha Shinbun*, March 6 and March 13, 1931. The March 6 issue also referred to a report in the February 21 issue of *Kokumin Shinbun* that Sano, Nabeyama, and Mitamura had failed in an attempted escape from prison.

49. *Inprecorr*, X, January 2, 1931, 2-4.

50. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 337-38.

51. Suzuki Takeshi, pp. 135-38. See also *Inprecorr*, XI, August 6, 1931, 767-68.

52. Ichikawa's statement was made during five court sessions between July 21

and July 30, 1931. Part of it was included in the special issue of *Puroretaria Kagaku* (November 1931). The full text of his statement was then edited and printed in secret by the Communist Party as *Nihon Kyosanto Shoshi* (Short History of the Japanese Communist Party) in June 1932. The text was revised after the war and reprinted (see Ichikawa, *Nihon Kyosanto*). The edited court statement was also translated into Russian and included in *Tikhii Okean* (Calm Ocean), No. 1, 1934, pp. 113–68.

53. For example, “Fight Against the War Preparations of Japanese Imperialism” and “The Pressing Danger of War,” in *Sekki* (July 6, 1931), I, 154, 158–61, and “Unite, Workers of China, Korea, and Japan, and Turn the Guns on Japanese Imperialists and Chinese Reactionaries—An Appeal Concerning the Wan Pao Shan and Korean Incidents,” in *Sekki* (July 29, 1931), I, 181–82.

54. Nabeyama, *Watakushi*, pp. 140–42.

55. *Asahi Shinbun*, October 30, 1932.

56. Yamamoto and Arita, pp. 325–26.

57. For a detailed breakdown of the party’s organization during the period from January 1931 to October 1932, see Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, p. 9. The information of the party structure is based on Kazama’s statement to the police after he was arrested in October 1932. The same material is included in the Ministry of Justice’s *Nihon Kyosanto Shi—Senzen*, pp. 289–94.

58. *Sekki* (October 5, 1931), I, 259–60. See also *Inprecorr*, XI, October 8, 1931, 947.

59. Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, p. 597.

60. The platform of the National Masses Party called for the adoption of universal suffrage; abolition of repressive laws; freedom of speech, press, and association; opposition to imperialist war; the right to organize, strike, and engage in collective bargaining; a minimum-wage law; an eight-hour day; protective laws for women and children in industry, and for workers in dangerous trades; and the passage of unemployment and social insurance legislation. Colbert, pp. 30–31.

61. The platform of the National Labor-Farmer Masses Party included political demands calling for suffrage for everyone over eighteen, abolition of repressive laws and the special police organizations set up for the enforcement of those laws, radical reform of the bureaucracy, popular election of governors and mayors and an increase in the powers of prefectural assemblies, and abolition of the peerage; diplomatic demands calling for opposition to aggression and imperialism, repudiation of secret diplomacy, worldwide freedom of immigration, and the right to cooperate with proletarians abroad; domestic demands calling for a drastic reduction of armaments and of war expenditures, shortening of the conscription period, better treatment of soldiers, and economic protection for soldiers’ families; financial demands calling for abolition of government subsidies to capitalists, institution of a property tax, a tax on increased land values, high progressive tax rates on capital, inheritances, incomes, land, and profits, abolition of direct taxes, such as excises and duties on necessities, that bore most heavily upon the lower income groups, and the lowering of charges in government-owned monopolies, e.g., tobacco, postal service; and social demands calling for abolition of discrimination based on class or sex, prohibition of the traffic in women and children, establishment of a free ten-year compulsory education system and of a far-reaching state-paid social insurance system, freedom for the study of sociology in the schools, and abolition of government-sponsored or -controlled military training associations and institutes. Colbert, pp. 31–32.

62. Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, pp. 563–64.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 638. See also Koyama and Kishimoto, p. 241.

64. Home Ministry, *Showa 1931*, p. 546.

65. Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, p. 615.

66. According to Colbert, the Social Masses Party adopted a program "unequivocally socialist" in nature. "Specifically," she writes, "the Social Masses Party committed itself to state control of staple industries, guilds, banking organs, and staple agricultural products; nationalization of land and guarantee of the rights of tenant farmers; promulgation of labor and social insurance legislation; state management of housing and medical care; absolute opposition to imperialist and capitalist wars; support of the principle of the equality of all races of the world; and the establishment of world peace." On the whole, she says, the Social Masses Party refrained from any direct attack on military and foreign policy, seeking to avoid party division and government suppression by a policy of limited criticism and to promote working-class interests by the same technique. Colbert, pp. 35-36. See also Totten, pp. 164, 166.

67. Totten, pp. 262-63.

68. For material on the Communist Party and the 1932 general election, see Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, pp. 119-23. See also the extra issue of *Sekki* dated January 30, 1932.

69. *Sekki* (March 15, 1932), II, 125.

70. *Ibid.* (March 8, 1932), II, 121-22.

71. *Ibid.* (March 2, 1932), II, 104-5.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 105.

73. *Inprecorr*, XII, December 15, 1932, 1214-16.

74. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, p. 304.

75. *Sekki* (March 22, 1932), II, 137-39.

76. For Zenkyo activities in the spring of 1932, see Watanabe Toru, pp. 283-84.

77. *Sekki* (May 30, 1932), II, 199-202.

78. Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, pp. 135-36.

79. *Inprecorr*, XII, February 11, 1932, 99-100. Nosaka wrote under the name Okano Susumu until 1945.

80. *Sekki* (July 2, 1932), II, 235-38.

81. The English text included the following: "In advancing the thesis of the proletarian character of the future revolution, the Japanese comrades are displaying an underestimation of the role of the monarchy, this principle [sic] bulwark of political reaction and of all the relics of feudalism in the country, this enemy of the toiling masses of Japan, against which the main blow must be directed" (pp. 221-22).

82. Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, p. 286.

83. Nosaka, "Komintern no Omoide—Soritsu Shijuyonnen ni Attate" (Memories of the Comintern—On the Occasion of Its Fortieth Anniversary), *Akahata*, March 3, 1959. See Japanese Communist Party, *Nosaka*, p. 6. See also "Fusetsu Gojunen," p. 119.

84. The Comintern's alarm was reflected in article after article in *International Press Correspondence*, culminating in the report of an interview with Katayama, Yamamoto Kenzo, and Okano Susumu (Nosaka) in the July 28, 1932, issue (XII, 689-91).

85. McKenzie, pp. 79-80. Kuusinen's report, apparently not published in the Comintern periodicals, is included in P. Mif and G. Voitinsky, eds., *Sovremennaiia Iaponiia: Sbornik Pervyi* (Contemporary Japan: First Miscellany) (Moscow, 1934), pp. 26-38.

86. Katayama published a number of articles about the Manchurian situation in *International Press Correspondence*. See, for example, "The Japanese Proletariat Opposed to Japanese Imperialism" in the October 1, 1931, issue and "Inter-

national Fight Against War and Intervention" in the May 5, 1932, issue. Katayama's analysis was consistent with the 1931 theses, not the new line that was emerging. He attributed the Japanese invasion of Manchuria to the aggressive action of the Japanese bourgeoisie, and particularly to the policies of the Wakatsuki cabinet. As late as May 1932 he called for a civil war in Japan to overthrow Japanese imperialism and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. For a recent characterization of Katayama's role at this time, see Kishimoto *et al.*, pp. 326-27.

87. Kawakami Hajime, pp. 113-14. For Kawakami's break with the New Labor-Farmer Party and Oyama Ikuo, see Totten, pp. 189-90.

88. "Sanro no Omoide," pp. 22-23.

89. "Nihon Mondai ni Kansuru Shin Teze Happyo ni Saishi Doshi Shokun ni Tsugu" (Announcement to Our Comrades on the Occasion of Publishing the New Theses on the Japanese Problem), *Sekki*, July 10, 1932 (Special Issue). The announcement is also included in Yamamoto and Arita, pp. 252-62, and in Ishido and Yamabe, pp. 120-28.

90. Kazama, *Mosuko Kyosandaigaku*, p. 289.

91. *Inprecorr*, XII, December 15, 1932, 1206.

92. Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, pp. 9, 13ff. The police records do not include Matsumura as a member of the central committee. The central committee was divided into two groups. One was to discuss political affairs and included Kazama, Iwata, Konno, Miyagawa, Kodama, Gengoromaru, Oizumi, and Yamashita. The other was to discuss organizational questions and included Kazama, Iwata, Konno, Tai, Hirasawa, Kishi, Gengoromaru, and Ishida. This division may have been based upon instructions Kazama received in May 1931 from the Far Eastern Bureau at Shanghai. Among other things, he was told that "the organization of the central should be made dual, and the two sections should take turns directing lower organizations." Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, p. 137.

93. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 330-32.

94. Deakin and Storry, pp. 85, 94.

95. Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, pp. 51, 73. For the names of communist sympathizers, see pp. 146-47.

96. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56, 145, and Otsuka, pp. 43-78. Otsuka's work provides an interesting account of his affiliation with the Japanese Communist Party, which he joined in 1927. Up to the time of his arrest, he served as liaison man between the party and Kawakami, his brother-in-law.

97. *Sekki* (October 11, 1932), IV, 224.

98. Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, pp. 140, 142-43. The delegates arrested in the so-called Atami Incident included Iwafune Shozo, Kumakura Kazuo, Hirasawa Eich, Shinzaike Nagaharu, Kishi Masaru, Tanaka Toshitomo, Sudeshima Haruichi, Sato Kojiro, Miyazawa Masao, Nishikigori Hikoshichi, and Kotani Yoshitaka.

99. Those who escaped the October arrests protested the murder of Iwata in the November 5 and November 10 issues of *Sekki*. They, too, were soon arrested.

100. Among Kobayashi's works was a short novel, *Senkuhyaku Nijuhachinen Sangatsu Jugonichi*, or *March 15, 1928*, concerning the maltreatment and torture of communist suspects rounded up on that date. He was not arrested at that time because he was not a party member. He joined the party in 1931 and wrote the novel *To Seikatsusha* (Party Life) in 1932. For a discussion of his works, see Shea, pp. 307-39.

101. Home Ministry, *Showa 1932*, pp. 149, 150-52, 159-62.

102. See also Hakamada, *Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 2-3. This work is based on a lec-

ture Hakamada delivered on May 27, 1949. See also Yamamoto and Arita, pp. 310, 314–15.

103. Hakamada, *Nihon Kyosanto*, p. 3.

104. Otsuka, pp. 91–92.

CHAPTER 9

1. Hanazawa, pp. 75–80.

2. Home Ministry, *Showa 1933*, p. 11. According to Hakamada, who was assigned to an organizational post on the party's Tokyo local committee, Oizumi and Noro opposed his inclusion on the central committee (Hakamada, *Nihon Kyosanto*, p. 4).

3. *Sekki* (January 25, 1933), III, 151.

4. Hakamada, *Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 14–15.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 11. See the appendix to *Sekki* (February 25, 1933), III, 181–82, for the party's appeal for financial support of this organ.

6. Appendix to *Sekki* (February 5, 1933), III, 163.

7. "Some Experiences from the Activity of the Communist Party of Japan in the Army," *Communist International*, July 20, 1934, pp. 477–84.

8. One important financial supporter of the party was an Australian communist named W. Maxwell Bickerton, who had lived in Tokyo since approximately 1923. He was arrested by the police in March 1934. He was finally released and went to London by way of Shanghai, Canada, and the United States. Along the way, he set up communications posts to facilitate contact between the Japanese party and the Comintern (Hakamada, *Nihon Kyosanto*, p. 25; see also Johnson, p. 244n).

9. Home Ministry, *Showa 1933*, pp. 12–13.

10. The bibliography of the Noro-Inomata dispute is: Inomata, *Gendai Nihon Burujoaji* (a compilation of articles); Noro, "Inomata," "Nihon ni Okeru," and *Nihon Shihonshugi Hattatsu Shi*; Inomata, "Tochi Mondai," "Puroretaria," and *Botsuraku* (especially chapter four); Noro, "Nihon Shihonshugi Gendankai"; Inomata, "Marukushushgi"; Noro, "Botsuraku"; and Inomata, "Inomataizumu."

11. See Hirata.

12. Tokyo District Court, *Preliminary Court Protocol of Oizumi*. Oizumi also admitted that he had been employed as a spy by the chief of the Thought Police of Niigata Prefecture prior to the time that he became a member of the party's central committee. For details on this incident, see Home Ministry, *Showa 1933*, pp. 49–50, and Hakamada, *Nihon Kyosanto*, pp. 19–22. Kamiyama Shigeo states that he sent memoranda to the central committee on the possibility of Obata being a spy from February 1931 on, but that they were not taken seriously until the end of 1933 (Kamiyama, p. 261). The party's central committee published its account of the "revolutionary trial" of Oizumi (Katano) and Obata (Furukawa) in *Sekki* (January 17, 1934), IV, 116–17. The same issue (p. 115) carried an appeal by Nosaka Sanzo (Okano) for a systematic struggle against police spies and agents provocateurs.

13. Tokyo District Court, *Preliminary Court Protocol of Oizumi*.

14. Home Ministry, *Showa 1933*, pp. 49–50, and *Showa 1934*, p. 53.

15. Yamamoto and Arita, p. 392.

16. Sano and Nabeyama, "Kinpaku." See also *Tenko*, pp. 164–68.

17. Sano and Nabeyama, "Kyodo Hikoku."

18. Yamakawa, "Tenko." See also Kono, who commented that if the authors'

names had not appeared on the letter, it might well have been used as a theoretical document of "state socialism," pp. 205-7.

19. Shakai Keizai Rodo Kenkyujo, p. 137.

20. See the attachment prepared by the Ministry of Justice in the Home Ministry's *Sano Nabeyama*.

21. Deakin and Storry, p. 276.

22. Nakano, p. 204. See also Ministry of Justice, *Shiho Kenkyu*, March 1935, p. 22. Judge Miyagi, who became the legal adviser to Sano and Nabeyama, believed that both men were influenced by the fact that the trial of the party leaders did not have the impact on the public that the party expected (see Miyagi, pp. 208-9).

23. *Sekki* (July 16, 1933), IV, 35, and (April 23, 1934), IV, 136-37.

24. *Inprecorr*, XIII, August 4, 1933, 754-56. Translations of the articles appeared in *Sekki* (September 26, 1933), IV, 81, and (October 10, 1933), IV, 85.

25. "For Unity in the Communist Party of Japan," *Communist International*, July 5, 1935, pp. 813-30.

26. Kamiyama, p. 190. He called the Majority Faction "counterrevolutionary mensheviks." Hakamada later accused Miyauchi and Yamamoto of being "mountebanks and provocateurs" (Hakamada, "Tasuha"). For details on the activities of the Majority Faction, see Home Ministry, *Showa 1934*, pp. 56-74.

27. Watanabe Toru, pp. 308-9, 311.

28. Kamiyama, pp. 84-87.

29. *Sekki* (March 8, 1934), IV, 126.

30. For information on three returnees—Kandachi Hachiro, Iizuka Hiroshi, and Takaya Kakuzo—see Home Ministry, *Showa 1934*, pp. 54-55, and *Showa 1935*, pp. 26-27.

31. Nosaka was increasingly active in the Comintern, especially after the death of Katayama in November 1933. He presented a paper—"The Revolutionary Struggle of the Toiling Masses of Japan"—to the 13th Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Comintern in December 1933. In it he attacked Japan's "fascist, military dictatorship" and "the fascistization of social democracy." He called upon his comrades in Japan to "Turn the Coming Imperialist War into a Civil War!" He was unable to provide much in the way of practical advice, of course. He urged the Japanese communists "to organize on a united front basis mass strikes and demonstrations against the war budget, new burdens of war, high cost of living, driving the peasants from the land, etc." Given his attack on social democracy, it is clear that he was calling for a united front from below, not an alliance of parties and groups. See also his speech to the plenum in *Inprecorr*, XIV, March 5, 1934, 378-81.

32. *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 681-727. These materials appeared originally in *Kaigai yori no Sayoku Senden Insatsubutsu Shu* (Collection of Left-Wing Printed Propaganda from Abroad), published by the Home Ministry in September 1936.

33. Yamamoto Kenzo (Pseud. Tanaka), "For a Broad United Front in Japan," *Communist International*, April 20, 1935, pp. 396-408. Yamamoto stated: "It is quite clear that unless a mass opposition movement and mass opposition groups are established in these organizations, . . . unless a sensitive, individual approach is made to each worker in the fascist and reformist organizations, unless shape is given at the right time to the demands advanced by the workers, and unless their daily struggle is organized (in spite of the resistance of the reformist and fascist leaders), there can be no question of mass economic battles, of revolutionizing these battles, of leading the workers to mass political strikes, and of decisive battle in a broad united front against the capitalist offensive. . . . If each and every com-

munist and supporter of the revolutionary trade union movement were to become a member of the legal trade union in the factory where he works, then—and only then—would the advanced workers be in a position to develop a genuine struggle against the divisive policy of the trade union bureaucrats . . . and ensure that the rank and file—and they alone—define the policy of each and every trade union.”

34. “Resolution on the Report of Comrade Manuilsky, adopted 20 August, 1935,” *VII Congress of the Communist International, Abridged Stenographic Report* (Moscow, 1939), pp. 602-3; cited in Brimmell, p. 127.

35. McKenzie, p. 152.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 135, 153-54. See also Dimitroff (Dimitrov), *passim*.

37. *Inprecorr*, XV, August 10, 1935, 877.

38. *Ibid.*, October 7, 1935, 1279-80. Nosaka stated: “There are people in our party who regard the reformist and reactionary unions as organizations hostile to the proletariat. This is a serious mistake. . . . We must not forget that the unions are mass organizations of workers who are brutally exploited by the capitalists, and though the union members have been misled, they can and should be won over for the class struggle.” Nor, said Nosaka, should communists confuse the patriotic and monarchist workers with the fascists: “We must not treat them as fascists, even if they belong to organizations affiliated with the fascist parties. We must not remain isolated from the workers and from their trade unions, but, in spite of abuse and repression on the part of the corrupt leaders, join the unions and actively work for the establishment of a united front of all workers, regardless of their political beliefs.”

39. *Inprecorr*, XV, December 2, 1935, 1620. Yamamoto saw the party’s goal as the establishment of “a people’s united front of all sections of the population whose rights have been denied, who suffer from the arbitrariness and tyranny of the police.” In his words, “We propose a united front of all who desire to fight against the militarism that is ruining our people, for curtailing the war budget, for using the funds of the war budget for the relief of the starving peasants, the unemployed, the needy artisans, home craftsmen, and small tradesmen. . . . Through the united front, through joint struggle and strikes for the alleviation of immediate grievances, through fighting for increased trade union activity, we must extend our influence over the masses.”

40. “For Unity in the Communist Party of Japan,” *Communist International*, July 5, 1935, pp. 813-30.

41. Home Ministry, *Showa 1936*, pp. 59-66.

42. Kasuga. See also Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 456-60, and Swearingen and Langer, p. 65.

43. Kobayashi died in jail in February 1941. See Nezu.

44. Ministry of Justice, Public Safety Agency, pp. 476-79. Two essays by Kamiyama Shigeo are included in “Kyu Zenkyo Sasshin Domeikai To Saiken Undo Kankei Shiryo” (Materials Relating to the Party Rebuilding Movement by Former Zenkyo Renovation League Elements), published in 1941 and 1942 by the Ministry of Justice as part of a series—*Shiso Shiryo Pamfuretto Tokushu* (Special Pamphlets on Thought Materials).

45. Colbert, pp. 42-43.

46. Colbert has commented on the election campaign as follows: “Social Masses Party election slogans were similar to those of the past. Once again they called for internal reform and external peace. They included also a demand for the negotiation of a Russo-Japanese nonaggression pact. The election program of the recently organized Japan Proletarian Party was somewhat more radical on certain issues. The Japan Proletarian Party program emphasized its opposition to fascism,

whereas the Social Masses Party program was silent on this question. The Japan Proletarian Party demanded reduction of military expenditures, whereas the Social Masses Party called for their rationalization. The Social Masses Party program, on the other hand, continued to call for nationalization of major industries, a point on which the Japan Proletarian Party was silent" (pp. 48-49).

47. Tokyo District Court, "Ronoha to Nihon Musanto," especially pp. 78-79. This is the text of a lecture given by Public Prosecutor Ikeda Katsu. For a detailed study of the Japan Proletarian Party and the Ronoha, see Ministry of Justice, "Nihon Musanto."

48. Colbert, pp. 51ff. See also Totten, p. 400.

49. Home Ministry, *Showa 1940*, pp. 11-12. See also *Showa 1939*, pp. 11ff.

50. Home Ministry, *Showa 1940*, pp. 23-40.

51. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-53.

52. Yamamoto's death, in April 1942 of tuberculosis, was not disclosed until an article by Nosaka—"To wo Kizuita Hitobito" (The People Who Founded the Party)—appeared in the July 15, 1962, issue of *Akahata* in celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Japanese Communist Party. This article was published in October 1962 as a pamphlet under the same title by the Japanese Communist Party.

53. Swearingen and Langer, pp. 73-74.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 79, and Colbert, pp. 61ff. 55. Colbert, pp. 64-65.

56. Swearingen and Langer, p. 81. 57. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82.

58. The discussion in the text of Nosaka's thought in this period is based on Colbert, pp. 66-68. For a more detailed treatment with sources, see Japanese Communist Party, *Nosaka Sanzo*.

59. See the text of Nosaka's letter to a reporter of the *Chinese Liberation Daily*, in *Gendai Shi Shiryo*, XIV, 914-16.

60. Maruyama, p. 47.

61. Totten, p. 392.

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<i>Chuo Koron</i> (Central Review)	<i>Sekki</i> (Red Flag)
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Index

- Abe Isoo, 2f, 8, 75, 80, 99n, 100, 102, 268
Abe Yoshimi, 188n, 189, 192
Advance (Zenshin), 250
Against the Storm (Arashio Tsuite), 261
Akamatsu Katsumaro, 18–24 *passim*, 49n, 69, 87n, 222, 250f; in Sodomei, 50, 75, 80, 88, 90; and parliamentarianism, 66, 75f, 102, 150; 362 (biog.)
Akiwa Matsugoro, 150
Akizasa Masanosuke, 239, 244, 251
All-Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts (NAPF), 213
All-Japan General Federation of Labor (Zen Nihon Rodo Sodomei), 261
All-Japan League of Peasant Unions (Zen Nihon Nomin Kumiai Domei), 101
All-Japan Peasant Union (Zen Nihon Nomin Kumiai), 103, 160, 213
All-Japan Proletarian Youth League (Zen Nihon Musan Seinen Domei), 93–94, 98f, 101, 154, 156, 163
All-Japan Student Social Science Federation, *see* Gakuren
Amemiya Tokusaburo, 112n
American Communist Party, 70, 166, 254, 257n, 263
Ando Toshio, 176
Aono Suekichi, 46, 49n, 75–80 *passim*, 84, 87, 135, 362–63 (biog.)
Aofuku, 13
Arahata Kanson, 3, 7–16 *passim*, 24f, 52, 56, 84, 94, 125; and 1st JCP, 31f, 48f, 63n, 64, 70, 76–79 *passim*, 116ff, 135; as non-Party member, 138, 152n, 153ff, 262, 269; 363–64 (biog.)
Arai Kuniosuke, 49n
Arashio Tsuite, 261
Arrests, mass: June 1923, 67–69, 76, 94, 106f; White Terror, 71; March 15, 1928, 153–60, 166, 241–42; April 16, 1929, 180–81, 192, 242; Bank Gang Incident, 236–38, 241, 245n; non-communist groups, 262. *See also* Public Trial
Asahi Shinbun, 156
Asanuma Inejiro, 100, 102
Aso Hisashi, 18, 24, 68n, 76, 100, 102, 150, 157, 173f
Association for Rebuilding the Labor-Farmer Party (Ronoto Saiken Shinto Jumbikai), 158–59
August League (Hachigatsu Domei), 24
Automobile Workers Union, 262
Baku Congress, 29, 35, 37f
Bank Gang Incident, *see* Arrests
Battle Flag (Senki), 213f
Bebel, August, 1
Bergson, Henri, 11
Blue Uniform (Aofuku), 13
Browder, Earl, 160n, 171
Brown, E. H., 105
Builders' League (Kensetsusha Domei), 19, 58, 67, 71, 102
Bukharin, N. I., 14, 43f, 60, 80, 117ff, 164ff, 197, 206ff
Bukharin Theses, *see* Draft Platform
Bulgaria, 206
Bungei Sensen, 120, 213
Bunka Domei, 58, 67
Business News (Jitsugyo Shinbun), 8
Capital, 13
Central committees: 1st JCP, 49, 63; Group, 94; 2d JCP, 112, 125, 138–39, 172, 176, 182, 188f, 199, 220, 235, 239, 243f; prison central committee, 200n
Central News (Chuo Shinbun), 4
Central Review (Chuo Koron), 69, 148
Chiang Kai-shek, 127, 163
Chikauchi Konnai, 139, 150
China, 27f, 61, 91, 168, 171, 186, 191, 197, 267; and Comintern, 27, 36, 40ff, 83, 272; revolution, 114, 120, 144, 151, 166f, 177, 186, 205, 219; Communist Party in, 123–24, 127, 167, 249, 264–65; war with Japan, 124, 162f, 167, 219–23 *passim*, 234, 262, 271
Chou En-lai, 171
Christianity, 1ff, 9, 20f, 105
Chuo Koron, 69, 148

- Chuo Shinbun*, 4
- Class War (Kaikyusen)*, 50n, 140
- Comintern (Third International), 14, 27, 68, 85, 125, 138, 150, 156, 194–98 *passim*; concern with Asia, 26–30, 36–45; and Sino-Japanese conflict, 163, 229; Far Eastern Bureau, 171n, 186, 201, 236; dissolved, 266, 275. *See also Communist International and International Press Correspondence*
- Congresses: Second, 28, 35f; Third, 32f, 35–38, 52, 58; Fourth, 48, 59–64 *passim*, 70n, 78; Fifth, 78, 83, 89n, 94; Sixth, 154, 164–68, 171, 189, 205–9 *passim*; Seventh, 164, 254–57
- ECCI Plenums: Third, 69–71; Sixth, 105–6; Seventh, 112, 117; Eighth, 119; Tenth, 194, 205, 208
- and Japan: early contact with leftists, 29–45 *passim*; JCP as branch, 59, 70n; reaction to suppression of JCP, 69ff, 160–63; relations with JCP, 77ff, 94, 118–26, 134, 155, 186f, 246, 253–57 *passim*, 272–74; and reestablishment of JCP, 83–87, 199; on Yamakawaism and Fukumotoism, 122–23, 144
- Theses: “The National and Colonial Question,” 28, 41; “The World Situation and Our Tasks,” 35; “Organizational Structure of the Communist Parties,” 36; “The United Workers’ Front,” 53; “Theses on Tactics,” 83; “The International Situation and the Tasks of the Comintern,” 164–66. *For theses on Japan, see Theses and individual theses by name*
- Commoners’ News (Heimin Shinbun)*, weekly, 3f, 8f; daily, 6; monthly, 11
- Communist International*, 228f
- Communist Organizations of the East Congress, 26f
- Communist Youth League, *see Japanese Communist Youth League*
- Conference on the International Union of Socialist Parties, 44
- Congress of Japanese Labor Unions (Nihon Rodo Kumiai Kaigi), 222
- Congress of the Peoples of the East, *see Baku Congress*
- Council for Making Zenkyo Militant (Senkyo), 196, 212
- Culture League (Bunka Domei), 58, 67
- Daini Musansha Shinbun*, *see The Second Proletarian News*
- Dawn Society (Reimeikai), 18
- Defections from JCP, 183–87, 245–52, 275
- Democracy*, 19
- Dimitrov, Georgi, 255
- Dokuritsu Rodo Kyokai, 99n, 102
- Doshisha University, 8
- Draft Platform (1922), 59–62, 64–67, 98, 120, 279–82 (text)
- Eastern Workers Communist University (KUTV), *see* Kutobe
- Emancipation (Kaiho)*, 13n, 54
- Engels, 80, 108
- Enlightened People’s Communist Party (Gyomin Kyosanto), 34–35, 39, 48, 49n, 63f
- Enlightenment Society (Keimeikai), 23, 58
- Far Eastern Peoples’ Congress, 38–45
- Farmer-Labor Party (Nomin Rodoto), 99–100
- Federation of Government Enterprise Workers (Kangyo Rodo Sodomei), 100, 203
- Formosa, *see* Taiwan
- Fourier, Charles, 1
- Fractions, 94, 106, 139, 142, 150, 166, 170, 176, 183, 195f, 203, 211–14 *passim*, 252
- Friday Society, 14
- Friend of the Soldiers (Heishi no Tomo)*, 235, 242
- Friendly Society, *see* Yuaikai
- Fujii Hideo, 260
- Fujii Tetsuo, 112n, 139, 152, 364 (biog.)
- Fujiwara Hisashi, 112n
- Fukuda Tokuzo, 18
- Fukumoto Kazuo, 68n, 80, 104–29 *passim*, 139, 154, 174, 216n, 219, 274; Fukumotoism, 107n, 108–14 *passim*, 182ff; anti-Fukumotoism, 116–19, 122–23, 128f, 144–45, 205; 364–65 (biog.)
- Fukuoka News (Fukuoka Shinbun)*, 8
- Fuse Tatsuji, 218
- Futsusenkyo Kenkyukai, 18
- Gakuren (All-Japan Student Social Science Federation), 58, 92–93, 195
- General Federation of Japanese Labor Unions (Nihon Rodo Kumiai Sorengo), 56, 100
- General Federation of Japanese Peasant Unions (Nihon Nomin Kumiai Sodomei), 103n, 213
- Gengoromaru Yoshiharu, 227, 235
- Genro*, 16f, 268, 270
- George, Henry, 1
- Germany, 42, 83, 130, 254; Communist Party in, 108, 234; idealism, 269
- Gikai Kisan Toso Domei, 190
- Goshiki convention, 112–16 *passim*
- Gospel to Youth (Seinen no Fukuin)*, 9

- Great Britain, 27, 83, 120, 186, 266; Communist Party in, 49, 105, 166. *See also* Imperialism
- Grey, B., 34-35
- Gunji Kenkyudan, 67
- Gyomin Kyosanto, 34-35, 39, 48, 49n, 63f
- Gyominkai, 19, 34
- Hachigatsu Domei, 24
- Hakamada Satomi, 160, 240, 251ff, 264, 267, 365 (biog.)
- Hamaguchi, Prime Minister, 189-92 *passim*, 215
- Hanaoka Kiyoshi, 49n
- Haniya Tamazo, 49n
- Hara Takashi, Prime Minister, 16ff, 23, 150
- Hasegawa Hiroshi, 261
- Hasegawa Shigeru, 235
- Hashiura Tokio, 32, 49, 63n, 68
- Hayama Yoshiki, 49n
- Heckert, Profintern official, 169
- Heimin Shinbun*, *see* *Commoners' News*
- Heishi no Tomo*, 235, 242
- Heller, L., 84, 89, 105
- Heller Theses (1925), 89-94 *passim*
- Henmi Shigeo, 242n, 243ff
- High Mast (Takai Masto)*, 235
- High Treason Case of 1911, 7, 65
- Hikari*, 3
- Hirabayashi Hatsunosuke, 49n
- Hirano Rikizo, 101, 174
- Hirasawa Eiichi, 235
- Hirasawa Keishiichi, 71
- Hirata Shinsaku, 34
- Hirohito, Emperor, 266
- Hojo Kazuo, *see* Fukumoto Kazuo
- Hojo Yotsuo, 235
- Hokkaido News (Hokkaido Tsushin)*, 140
- Hososako Kanemitsu, 102ff, 159, 172
- Hosoya Matsuta, 174
- Huang Pin, 160n
- Hungary, 42, 206
- Hyogikai (Japan Labor Union Council), 90-93, 98-101 *passim*, 115, 143, 156, 174; communist influence in, 97, 116, 125, 127, 139, 143, 154, 170; dissolved, 159, 163
- Ichikawa Shoichi, 46, 49n, 76f, 95, 116, 152ff, 165-68 *passim*, 180; arrest, trial, and imprisonment, 68, 154, 217ff, 264; central committee posts, 112, 125, 138f, 172, 176; controversies over theory, 127f, 136, 148; 365-66 (biog.)
- Ichikawa Yoshio, 49n, 64, 68
- Iijima Kimi, 227
- Iishi Masayoshi, 235
- Iizuka Mitsunobu, *see* Matsumura Noboru
- Imaizumi Zenichi, 235f
- Imamoto Bunkichii, 193f
- Imperial system, 9, 184f, 207, 246, 270-75 *passim*; communist views on, 44, 61, 65, 98, 124, 146-49, 177ff, 227-32 *passim*, 254, 265ff
- Inamura Junzo, 159
- Inamura Ryuichi, 49n, 139, 184, 209n
- Independent Labor Association (Dokuritsu Rodo Kyokai), 99n, 102
- Industrial Labor Research Institute, 231, 243
- Industrial Workers of the World, 4, 29, 35
- Inokuchi Masao, 150
- Inomata Tsunao, 49n, 58, 64-68 *passim*, 146, 262; as theorist, 80, 129-37 *passim*, 148, 174-81 *passim*, 209-10, 243; "The Political Position of the Bourgeoisie in Contemporary Japan," 130-31, 178; 366 (biog.)
- International*, 231
- International Federation of Trade Unions, 37f
- International Labor Organization, 72
- International News (Kokusai Tsushin)*, 257
- International Press Correspondence (Inpre-corr)*, 95n, 120, 150, 160, 171n, 227-31 *passim*
- International Socialist Review*, 24
- Inukai Tsuyoshi, Prime Minister, 223f, 245n
- Ishida Kyozo, 235
- Ishidate Kotoei, 189
- Isozaki Iwao, 220
- Ito Hirobumi, 4
- Ito Masanosuke, 91-92
- Ito Naoe, 11, 71
- Ito Ritsu, 261, 263
- Ito Tamotsu, 174, 219
- Iwao Iesada, 193f, 198, 250
- Iwata Yoshimichi, 94, 154f, 199f, 220, 235, 237, 243
- Janson, Jacob, 94, 107, 117ff, 138n, 139, 155, 171, 196f
- Japan Fabian Society, 80, 99n
- Japan Farmer Party (Nihon Nominto), 101, 173
- Japan Federation of Consumer Unions, 252, 262
- Japan General Federation of Miners, 67
- Japan Labor-Farmer Party (Nihon Ronoto), 102-4, 157, 173; communist views on, 114, 117, 123, 125, 143, 149ff, 169
- Japan Labor News (Nihon Rodo Shinbun)*, 13, 25
- Japan Labor Union Council, *see* Hyogikai

- Japan Labor Union Federation (Nihon Rodo Kumiai Sorengo), 56, 100
 Japan Labor Union League (Zen Nihon Kumiai Domei), 102f
 Japan Masses Party (Nihon Taishuto), 173–76 *passim*, 192, 196, 221
 Japan Peasant Union (Nihon Nomin Kumiai) 57–58, 93, 96, 100–4 *passim*, 143, 154, 160
Japan Political News (Nihon Seiji Shinbun), 250
 Japan Proletarian Culture Federation, *see* KOPF
 Japan Proletarian Literary Arts League (Nihon Puroretaria Bungei Renmei), 213
 Japan Proletarian Party (Nihon Musanto), 262f
 Japan Socialist Party (Nihon Shakaito), 6–9 *passim*, 99
 Japanese Communist Band (Nihon Kyosanshugisha Dan), 260–61
 Japanese Communist Bureau (1924), 79, 83–87 *passim*, 94
 Japanese Communist Group (1925), 95–96, 106
 Japanese Communist Party: organization of 1st JCP (1922), 31f, 48–50, 59f; dissolution of, 76–78; organization of 2d JCP (1926), 111–18 *passim*; membership, 49–50, 67, 95, 106, 125, 176, 188, 235, 267. *See also* Central committees and publications *by name*
 Japanese Communist Party Workers' Faction (Nihon Kyosanto Rodosha), 186f
 Japanese Communist Youth League, 58, 92–93, 174f, 182, 188, 193f, 226f, 240, 244; arrests in, 71, 171, 192, 195, 210, 214, 237, 239
 Japanese League Against Imperialism (Nihon Hantei Domei), 188
 Japanese People's Emancipation League, 264
 Japanese Social Democratic Party, *see* Social Democratic Party
 Japanese State Socialist Party (Nihon Kokka Shakaito), 222
Jitsugyo Shinbun, 8
 Joffe, Adolph, 39n

 Kadoya Hiroshi, 112n, 184f, 366–67 (biog.)
 Kagawa Toyohiko, 21ff, 55, 57, 80, 99n, 100, 102, 106, 160
Kaiho, 13n, 54
 Kaiin Kumiai, 100, 115n, 203
Kaikyusen, 50n, 140
Kaizo, *see* Reconstruction

 Kamiyama Shigeo, 195, 252f, 261, 367 (biog.)
 Kamiyama Toshio, 261, 264
 Kangyo Rodo Sodomei, 100, 203
 Kanno Sugako, 10
 Kansai League of Sodomei, 56
 Kanto District Council of Sodomei (Nihon Rodo Sodomei Kanto Chiho Hyogikai), 87ff
 Kanto Factory Workers Federation, 262
 Kanto League of Free Workers, 195
 Kanto League of the Japan Peasant Union (Nihon Nomin Kumiai Kanto Domei), 58
 Kanto League of Sodomei, 56, 87
 Kanto Machine Workers Union, 50, 57
 Kanto Metal Workers Union, 159, 195
 Kanto Printers Union, 182
 Karasawa Seihachi, 112n, 150, 224, 367 (biog.)
 Kasuga Shoichi, 367–68 (biog.)
 Kasuga Shojiro, 139, 152, 260f, 264, 368 (biog.)
 Katayama Mineto, 112n
 Katayama Sen, 1–8 *passim*, 35, 119, 150–51, 160; in U.S., 7, 14, 24; and Comintern, 14, 27, 59f, 83, 105, 165–66, 230, 251, 273; at Far Eastern People's Congress, 40–44 *passim*; attacks on Ronoha, 179–80
 Kato, Prime Minister, 81–83
 Kato Kanju, 102, 254n, 261f
 Kato Sadakichi, 188n, 189, 192
 Katsura, Prime Minister, 3, 6f, 16
 Kawai Etsuzo, 112, 117ff, 138n, 139, 152, 154, 184, 186, 369 (biog.)
 Kawai Yoshitora, 58, 69, 71
 Kawakami Hajime, 19, 107, 157, 183, 187, 231, 369 (biog.)
 Kawakami Kanichi, 260
 Kawakami Kiyoshi, 2
 Kawamura Tsuneichi, 139
 Kawasaki Tateo, 189, 250
 Kawauchi Tadahiko, 49n, 59–64 *passim*, 370 (biog.)
 Kazahaya Yasoji, 19
 Kazama Jokichi, 196–209 *passim*, 217–20 *passim*, 227, 229, 235, 237, 250, 273, 370 (biog.)
 Keimeikai, 23, 58
 Keio University, 21
 Kenseikai Party, 18, 136
 Kensetsusha Domei, 19, 58, 67, 71, 102
 Kiire Torataro, 112n
 Kijima Takaaki, 244
 Kikuta Zengoro, 112n
Kindai Shiso, 11f
 Kinoshita Naoe, 2f, 8
 Kinoshita Toshiro, 189
 Kishi Masaru, 220, 235

- Kitahara Tatsuo, 69, 79, 83–87 *passim*
 Kitaura Sentaro, 45, 84, 87, 93f, 107, 116–17, 135, 370–71 (biog.)
 Kiyohara Kazutaka, 139, 150
 Kobayashi Shinjiro, 63
 Kobayashi Yasuhiko, 231, 237
 Kobayashi Yonosuke, 255, 261
 Kodama Shizuko, 235, 250
 Koiwai Kiyoshi, 19, 49n, 63f, 68, 371 (biog.)
 Kokuminto Party, 18
 Kokuryo Goichiro, 49n, 75f, 112n, 117, 125, 138f, 154, 171, 218f, 371 (biog.)
 Kokusai Tsushin, 257
 Kondo Eizo, 14, 31, 39, 83, 89; and Enlightened People's Party, 33ff, 63f; and 1st JCP, 48f, 49n, 68, 70n, 76; 371–72 (biog.)
 Kondo Kenji, 32
 Konno Yojiro, 196, 199f, 214, 220, 235, 237, 264, 372 (biog.)
 Kono Mitsu, 102
 Konoe, Prime Minister, 263
 KOPF (Japan Proletarian Culture Federation), 214, 237, 240
 Korea, 36, 41, 61, 191, 197, 205, 247, 267
 Koreeda Kyoji, 139, 184, 372–73 (biog.)
 Kotaka Tamotsu, 253
 Kotoku Shusui, 2–10 *passim*, 47n
 Kropotkin, 4, 11, 19
 Kuki Katsuichi, 235f
 Kun, Bela, 43, 119
 Kurahara Korehito, 213–14
 Kuroda Hisao, 80, 110, 129, 135, 159, 174, 262
 Kusakabe Goichiro, 112n
 Kushida Tamizo, 40
 Kutobe (KUTV), 45, 118, 160, 172, 193, 196, 253, 261
 Kuusinen, C., 119, 168f, 230
 Kuwabara Rokuro, 260
 Kyoto Imperial University, 13n, 19, 93, 107, 156f, 173
- Labor (Rodo)*, 23, 50
 Labor and Liberty Society, 14
 Labor-Farmer (Rono), 135, 145, 148, 153, 181, 263n
 Labor-Farmer Faction, *see* Ronoha
 Labor-Farmer League (Rodo Domei), 187
 Labor-Farmer League for Securing Political Freedom (Seijiteki Jiyu Kakutoku Rono Domei), 173, 176, 183, 187
 Labor-Farmer Masses Party (Rono Taishuto), 173
 Labor-Farmer Party (Rodo Nominto), 100–106 *passim*, 110n, 111–17 *passim*, 126–29 *passim*, 143, 149–63 *passim*, 162; Comintern line on, 123ff, 169–73 *passim*, 274
- Labor-Farmer Proletarian Council (Rono Musan Kyogikai), 262
 Labor Left, 116
 Labor Movement (*Rodo Undo*), 16, 25, 31, 46
 Labor movement: development of, 1–2, 20–24, 55–57, 90–92, 189–90, 211, 271–72; legal status, 2, 72, 81–82, 211; communist activity in, 49f, 56f, 75, 87–92, 93–102 *passim*, 115–16, 142–43, 159–60, 174–76, 210–12. *See also* Strikes; Labor unions; and individual unions by name
 Labor News (*Rodo Shinbun*), 15, 88, 174, 211
 Labor-Student Society, 19
 Labor Union (*Rodo Kumiai*), 46
 Labor Union League (Rodo Kumiai Domei), 23
 Labor Union Left, 57
 Labor Union Study Group, 13
 Labor unions, role of, 11, 15, 20, 22f, 88, 99, 109f. *See also* Labor movement and individual unions by name
 Lassalle, Ferdinand, 1
 League Against War, 163
 League of Japanese Socialists in America, 14
 League of Nations, 16, 255
 League to Reform Sodomei (Nihon Sodomei Kakushin Domei), 89f
 Left-wing movement, 16–26, 46–48, 78, 80, 100, 151–52, 157, 191f, 221–24, 264, 268–73. *See also* Labor movement; Peasant movement; Proletarian party movement; Student movement; and individual parties by name
 Lenin, 12f, 27f, 40, 42, 46, 80, 107f, 125, 231
 Lenin Youth (*Reinen Seinen*), 188, 226
 “A Letter to the Japanese Communists,” 257–60, 352–61 (text)
 Leveler Youth League, 59, 93
 Levelers' Society (*Suiheisha*), 58–59, 258
 Liberation Movement Victims Relief Association, 155
 Liebnicht, Karl, 108
 The Light (*Hikari*), 3
 Lincoln, A., 19
 Literary Arts Front (*Bungei Sensen*), 120, 213
 Lozovsky, A., 197
 Lukács, György, 118
 Luxemburg, Rosa, 19, 108
- Maeno Zenshiro, 174, 182f, 188ff
 The Majority (*Tasuha*), 252
 Majority Faction, 252, 256
 Mamev, I. K., 29

- Manchukuo, 223, 254
 Manchuria, 215, 229, 231, 235, 246f, 267
 Manchurian Incident, 219–23 *passim*, 246, 273
 Maniwa Suekichi, 40–45 *passim*, 94, 154, 165, 168, 172, 176, 180
 Marty, L. A., 234
 Marukushizumu no Hata no Moto Ni, 108
 Marukusushugi, *see* Marxism
 Marx, 1, 4, 19, 80, 107f
 Marxism (Marukusushugi), 79f, 107f, 115n, 120, 127ff, 136, 176, 181; vs. Ronoha, 136, 144–48 *passim*, 177–80
 Mass Education League (Taishu Kyoiku Domei), 99n
 The Masses (Taishu), 110, 116, 120, 129
 Matsubara, *see* Miyagami Noritake
 Matsumura Noboru, 196, 199, 227, 235, 237–38, 244
 Matsuo Naoyoshi, 112, 139, 219, 373 (biog.)
 Matsuo Shigeki, 239, 243
 Matsuoka Komakichi, 21, 76, 90, 102
 May Day demonstrations, 23f, 59, 193, 212, 226, 242
 May 30th movement (China), 91f
 Meiji Restoration, 7, 43, 112, 130–31, 135, 146f, 179, 180n, 201
 Meiji University, 31
 Menshevism, 44, 128, 179
 Militarism, *see* Nationalism
 Military Affairs Study Group (Gunji Kenkyudan), 67
 Mimura Ryochi, 235
 Minami Iwao, 195ff
 Minami Katsushika Rodo Kyokai, 57f, 71
 Minami Kiichi, 150, 184f, 373–74 (biog.)
 Minjinkai, 18f, 100
 Minseito Party, 151, 192
 Minshu no Koe, 261
 Mitamura Shiro, 90ff, 112, 117, 138f, 152–55 *passim*, 172–76 *passim*, 180, 192; imprisonment, 215, 219, 224, 250; 374 (biog.)
 Miyagami Noritake, 226
 Miyagawa Torao, 235
 Miyagawa Yakuma, 220
 Miyagi Minoru, 216f
 Miyagi Yotoku, 263n
 Miyamoto Kenji, 239, 242–45 *passim*, 264, 374–75 (biog.)
 Miyauchi Isamu, 251f
 Miyazaki Ryusuke, 18, 21
 Mizogami Yakuma, 220
 Mizuno Shigeo, 112n, 138f, 154, 184–86, 208, 375 (biog.)
 Mizunuma Kuma, 45
 Mizunuma Tatsuo, 21
 Mizutani Chozaburo, 102, 173
 Modern Thought (Kindai Shiso), 11f
 Momose Yukio, 235
 Mori Motoi, 153n, 244f
 Morito Tatsuo, 40, 45
 Morning News (Yorozu Choho), 4, 8
 Moscow Theses (1926), 105–6, 293–94 (text)
 Motani Koichiro, 235
 Murao Satsuo, 94, 184f, 375 (biog.)
 Murayama Toshiro, 127f, 136–39 *passim*, 148, 154, 179, 184, 187, 375–76 (biog.)
 Murphy, J. T., 119
 Musan Seinen, 175, 188
 Musan Taishuto, 159, 173
 Musankaikyu, 46, 49n, 50
 Musansha Shinbun, *see* The Proletarian News
 Nabeyama Sadachika, 49n, 64n, 66, 117ff, 148, 154f, 171f, 224; labor activities, 74f, 88–92 *passim*, 159; central committee posts, 112, 125, 138f, 176; imprisoned, 180, 200n, 215–19 *passim*; defection, 245–51; 376 (biog.)
 Nakae Chomin, 4
 Nakamura Tsuneichi, 236
 Nakamura Yoshiaki, 49n, 75f, 88, 159n, 184, 376–77 (biog.)
 Nakano Hisao, 112n
 Nakao Katsuo, 91–92, 112, 117ff, 125, 138f, 152, 154, 219, 250, 377 (biog.)
 Nakasone Genwa, 34, 49n, 63f, 68
 Namba Hideo, 150, 154, 165, 180, 184, 377–78 (biog.)
 Nankatsu Labor Society, 50, 160
 Nankatsu Labor Union (Minami Katsushika Rodo Kyokai), 57f, 71
 NAPF (All-Japan Federation of Proletarian Arts), 213
 National Council of Japanese Labor Unions, *see* Zenkyo and Zempyo
 National Celluloid Workers Union, 21
 National Democratic Party (Zenkoku Minshuto), 192, 221
 National elections: 1917, 12; 1928, 148–52; 1930, 190–92; 1932, 214, 223–24; 1936, 262; 1937, 262
 National Federation of Students, *see* Gakuren
 National Labor-Farmer Masses Party (Zenkoku Rono Taishuto), 221ff, 261
 National Labor Union League (Zenro), 221f, 261
 National Masses Party (Zenkoku Taishuto), 221
 National Peasant Union, *see* Zenno
 Nationalism and militarism, 18, 103, 163, 167, 215, 222–25, 246f, 250, 254, 260–64, 270, 273
 Naval Workers Union, 115n

- Negishi Chozo, 235
New Era (Shin Kigen), 3
 New Labor-Farmer Party (Shin Rodo No-minto), 183, 187, 191f, 198, 221
 New Men Society (Shinjinkai), 18, 21, 58, 102, 156
New Social Review (Shin Shakai Hyoron), 13, 25
New Society (Shin Shakai), 12f, 24
 Newspapers and periodicals, *see individual publications by name*
Nichi Nichi Shinbun, 156
 Nihon Hantei Domei, 188
 Nihon Kokka Shakaito, 222
 Nihon Kyosanshugisha Dan, 260-61
 Nihon Kyosanto Rodosha, 186f
 Nihon Musanto, 262f
 Nihon Nomin Kumiai, *see* Japan Peasant Union
 Nihon Nomin Kumiai Kanto Domei, 58
 Nihon Nomin Kumiai Sodomei, 103n, 213
 Nihon Nominto, 101, 173
 Nihon Puroretaria Bungci Renmei, 213
 Nihon Puroretaria Bunka Renmei, *see* KOPF
 Nihon Rodo Kumiai Hyogikai, *see* Hyogikai
 Nihon Rodo Kumiai Kaigi, 222
 Nihon Rodo Kumiai Sorengo, 56, 100
Nihon Rodo Shinbun, 13, 25
 Nihon Rodo Sodomei, *see* Sodomei
 Nihon Rodo Sodomei Kanto Chiho Hyogikai, 87ff
 Nihon Ronoto, *see* Japan Labor-Farmer Party
Nihon Seiji Shinbun, 250
 Nihon Shakaito, 6-9 *passim*, 99
 Nihon Sodomei Kakushin Domei, 89f
 Nihon Taishuto, *see* Japan Masses Party
 Nikaido Umekichi, 40, 45
 Nishi Masao, 45, 49n, 53, 64, 68, 79, 378 (biog.)
 Nishikawa Kojiro, 2f, 8
 Nishimura Shizuko, 250
 Nishio Suehiro, 21, 76, 90, 100, 102
 Nishishiro Yoshiji, 236
 Nishiyama Buichi, 189
 Noda Ritsuta, 90ff, 139, 150, 378 (biog.)
 Nomin Rodoto, 99-100
Nomin Undo, 58
 Nonaka Masayuki, 40, 43, 45
 Noro Eitaro, 94, 239, 242-44; "Lectures on the History of the Development of Japanese Capitalism," 243; 378-79 (biog.)
 Nosaka Sanzo, 19, 21, 40, 45, 49f, 57, 64, 68, 76f; activities outside Japan, 201, 227-30 *passim*, 251-56 *passim*, 264-67 *passim*, 275; "A Letter to the Japanese Communists," 257-60, 352-61 (text); 379-80 (biog.)
 Oba Kako, 40
 Obata Tatsuo, 243f, 252
 Ohara Research Institute, 40
 Ohashi Toru, 184
 Oizumi Kenzo, 235, 239, 242, 252
 Okabe Kansuke, 101
 Okabe Ryuji, 261
 Okuma-Itagaki cabinet, 16
 Omori Bank robbery, *see* Arrests
Osaka Asahi, 17
Osaka Commoners' News (Osaka Heimin Shinbun), 10
 Osugi Sakae, 3, 7-16 *passim*, 24, 30ff, 40, 46, 53, 56, 71
 Otsuka Yusho, 235ff
 Oyama Ikuo, 75, 99n, 101ff, 110, 129, 159, 172f, 183, 187, 198
 Oyama Iwao, 175
 Pacific Labor Union Conference, 91
 Pak Chin-sun, 32
 Pan-Pacific Trade Unions Secretariat, 91, 160n, 171, 196
Party Builder (Tokensetsusha), 225, 261
 Peace Preservation Law (1925), 82, 93-97 *passim*, 126, 153-58 *passim*, 195, 219, 252, 263-67 *passim*, 271
Peasant Movement (Nomin Undo), 58
 Peasant movement, 22, 57-58, 90, 132, 143, 160, 170, 181, 189, 195f, 272
 Peasant unions, 57-58, 101, 139, 160, 168, 195f, 213. *See also* Zenno
People (Narod), 19
 People's League (Minjinkai), 18f, 100
 Piatnitsky, Osip, 119, 197f
Pioneer (Senku), 19
Political Studies (Seiji Kenkyu), 80-81
 Popular Front, 164, 253, 255-61
Pravda, 120
 Press Law, 2, 8-9, 16, 35
 Printers Union Fraternal Society (Shinyukai), 23
 Profintern (Red International of Labor Unions), 37-40 *passim*, 53, 68, 89ff, 99, 117, 143, 169, 195-200 *passim*, 206-13 *passim*, 237
 Proletarian Masses Party (Musansha Tai-shuto), 159, 173
The Proletarian News (Musansha Shinbun), 94ff, 112, 117n, 126, 154-58 *passim*, 172, 176, 188
 Proletarian party movement, 75f, 78, 80f, 95-104 *passim*, 110f, 221-24, 261-63
Proletarian Youth (Musansha Seinen), 175, 188
 Proletarian Youth League (Tokyo), 263

- The Proletariat (Musankaikyu)*, 46, 49n, 50
 Proudhon, Pierre, 1
 Public Peace Police Law, 2, 21–25 *passim*, 35, 68, 73, 81, 97
 Public Trial (1931), 215–20

 Radek, Karl, 36f, 60, 197
Reconstruction (Kaizo), 13n, 69, 80, 116, 245n, 248
 Red Aid Association, 155, 239
 Red Champions League (Sekishoku Senshi Domei), 182
Red Flag (Sekki), 140, 172, 176, 182, 199f, 225, 239–42 *passim*, 253, 260; quoted, 150–55 *passim*, 184, 205, 209, 211, 220, 224–29 *passim*, 236
Red Flag Friends Association (Sekki Tomo no Kai), 242
 Red Flag Incident, 7
 Reform League (Nihon Sodomei Kakushin Domei), 89f
 Reimeikai, 18
Reinen Seinen, 188, 226
 Rice Riots of 1918, 17, 20, 268
Rodo, 23, 50
 Rodo Domei, 187
Rodo Kumiai, 46
 Rodo Kumiai Domei, 23
 Rodo Nominto, *see* Labor-Farmer Party
Rodo Shinbun, *see* Labor News
Rodo Undo, 16, 25, 31, 46
Rodosha, 10
 Rodosha (Workers' Faction), 186f
 Rodosha Nominto, 173
Rodosha Shinbun, 50
Rono, *see* Labor-Farmer
 Rono Musan Kyogikai, 262
 Rono Taishuto, 173
 Ronoha, 135–37, 144–48, 154–59 *passim*, 174, 209–10, 247, 261ff, 273; communist controversies with, 144–48, 152f, 178ff, 207n
 Ronoto Saiken Shinto Jumbikai, 158–59
 Rousseau, 4, 19
 Roy, M. N., 105
 Russia: Communist Party in, 28, 186; tsarist, 42, 185, 246; recognition of Soviet regime, 52, 59, 61, 92, 254; Revolution (1905), 179; Revolution (October), 6, 12ff, 42, 44, 50, 87n, 182n, 268
 Russian Famine Relief International Labor Committee, 59
 Rutgers, S. J., 14, 27

 Safarov, Georgy, 42–44, 197–200 *passim*, 229
 Sahara Yasuji, 239, 242
 Saint-Simon, Comte de, 1
 Saionji, Prime Minister, 6

 Saito Hisao, 139
 Saito Takeshi, 188n, 189
 Sakai Toshihiko, 3–14 *passim*, 19, 24–35 *passim*, 39, 46–50 *passim*, 56, 63–68 *passim*, 76–87 *passim*, 268; as non-Party member, 117, 135, 159, 174; 380 (biog.)
 Sakinaka Toranosuke, 182, 188f, 192
 Sano Fumio, 46, 49n, 69, 112–18 *passim*, 125, 138, 184; activities in bureau and group, 76, 79, 84, 87, 94–99 *passim*, 107; 380–81 (biog.)
 Sano Hiroshi, 168, 175, 182, 189f, 250
 Sano Manabu, 19, 49n, 58, 63–68 *passim*, 83f, 89, 94, 116ff, 152–55 *passim*, 176–81 *passim*; publishing activities, 96, 112, 128–29, 144–48; and Comintern, 105, 165–69; as central committee member, 125–29 *passim*, 138f, 176; candidate for Diet, 191, 224; trial and defection, 215–19, 245–51; 381–82 (biog.)
 Sato Shuichi, 182f, 188, 195, 261
 Satsudo, *see* Zenkyo Renovation League
 Seamen's Union (Kaiin Kumiai), 100, 115n, 203
The Second Proletarian News (Daini Musansha Shinbun), 188, 190, 193f, 199, 218, 225
Seiji Kenkyu, 80–81
 Seiji Kenkyukai, 80, 93–101 *passim*, 110
 Seiji Mondai Kenkyukai, 75
 Seijiteki Jiyu Kakutoku Rono Domei, 173, 176, 183, 187
Seinen no Fukuin, 9
 Seishinkai, 23
 Seiyukai Party, 16, 18, 43, 126, 136, 148–51 *passim*, 192, 224
 Sekine Etsuro, 96
 Sekishoku Senshi Domei, 182
Sekki, *see* Red Flag
Sekki Tomo no Kai, 242
Senki, 213f
Senku, 19
 Senkyo (Council for Making Zenno Militant), 196, 212
 Shakai Minshuto, *see* Social Democratic Party
Shakai Mondai Kenkyu, 13n
 Shakai Taishuto, 222ff, 254–58 *passim*
Shakai Shiso, 120
Shakaishugi, 24f
 Shakaishugi Domei, *see* Socialist League
Shakaishugi Kenkyu, 3, 13, 25, 50, 53, 80
 Shakaishugi Kenkyukai, 1
 Shakaishugi Kyokai, 1–4
 Shakujii meeting, 64–70 *passim*
 Shanghai Theses (1925), 84–87, 94f, 283–92 (text)

- Shibuya Mokutaro, 67f
 Shiga Yoshio, 80, 99n, 117, 128–29, 138f, 215–19 *passim*, 264, 267, 382 (biog.)
 Shigeta Yoichi, 34
 Shimanaka Yuzo, 75, 80, 102
 Shimizu Kiyozo, 235
Shin Kigen, 3
 Shin Rodo Nominto, 183, 187, 191f, 198, 221
Shin Shakai, 12f, 24
Shin Shakai Hyoron, 13, 25
Shinetsu Red Flag (Shinetsu Sekki), 140
 Shinjinkai, *see* New Men Society
 Shinyukai, 23
 Shirakawa Yoshimatsu, 220
 Sino-Japanese War, *see* China, war with Japan
 Social Democratic Party (Shakai Minshuto):
 of 1901, 2; of 1926, 102–4, 110, 151, 158–61 *passim*, 169, 192, 221–22, 261; communist attacks on, 114, 123, 148–53 *passim*, 174
 Social Masses Party (Shakai Taishuto), 222ff, 254–58 *passim*
Social Thought (Shakai Shiso), 120
Socialism (Shakaishugi), 24f
 Socialist League (Shakaishugi Domei), 24–26, 30–33 *passim*, 40
 Socialist leaders, 1–16 *passim*, 24–27, 51, 76, 83, 135, 186. *See also* left-wing parties and unions by name
 Socialist Society (Shakaishugi Kyokai), 1–4
 Society for Political Studies (Seiji Kenkyukai), 80, 93–101 *passim*, 110. *See also* Society for the Study of Political Problems (Seiji Mondai Kenkyukai), 75
 Society for the Study of Socialism (Shakaishugi Kenkyukai), 1
 Society for the Support of the Common People, 11
 Society of Enlightened People (Gyominkai), 19, 34
 Sodomei (Nihon Rodo Sodomei), 50, 55–57, 72–76 *passim*, 82, 157, 203, 221f, 261; and Hyogikai, 87–102 *passim*, 115
 Soma Ichiro, 160, 382 (biog.)
 Sorge spy ring, 263
 Soviet Union, *see* Russia
 Spain, 206
 Special Thought Police, 153, 158, 244
 Stalin, 40, 44, 80, 165, 208, 228
 Stalin-Bukharin line, 164
 Stalin-Hitler Pact, 255
 Stirner, Max, 11
 Strikes, 7, 9, 20–24 *passim*, 55, 91–92, 174, 189, 193, 211
 Struggle League for Diet Dissolution (Gikai Kaisan Toso Domei), 190
 Student movement, 13, 17f, 58–59, 67–69, 92–94, 156–67, 175, 237, 263–64. *See also* Gakuren; All-Japan Proletarian Youth League; Japanese Communist Youth League
Studies in Socialism (Shakaishugi Kenkyu), 3, 13, 25, 50, 53, 80
Studies on Social Questions (Shakai Mondai Kenkyu), 13n
 Suffrage, *see* Universal Suffrage Manhood Act
 Sugimoto Fumio, 176, 180
 Sugiura Keiichi, 49n, 64f, 68, 112, 117, 125, 138f, 218f, 250; labor activities, 50, 57, 63, 76, 87f; candidate for Diet, 150, 224; 383 (biog.)
 Suiheisha, 58–59, 258
The Sun (Taiyo), 130
 Sunama Kazuyoshi, 172, 176, 219
 Suzuki Bunji, 20–23 *passim*, 72, 76, 102–6 *passim*
 Suzuki Mosaburo, 40, 45, 75, 99n, 129; Yamakawa adherent, 80, 110, 135; in proletarian party movement, 159, 174, 261f
 Syndicalist Study Group, 11
 Tadokoro Teruaki, 45, 49n, 63ff, 68, 383 (biog.)
 Takabatake Motoyuki, 9, 12f
 Taguchi Unzo, 35–45 *passim*
 Tai Tameshichi, 220, 235, 250
 Taika Society (Taikakai), 67
Taishu, *see* *The Masses*
 Taishu Kyoiku Domei, 99n
 Taiwan, 61, 191, 205, 247
Taiyo, 130
 Takahashi Kamekichi, 75, 80
 Takahashi Sadaki, 45, 49n, 59, 175–78 *passim*; in Russia, 118, 165, 168; trial and defection, 215, 219, 250; “The Development of Japanese Imperialism,” 80; 383–84 (biog.)
Takai Masto, 235
 Takano Fusataro, 1ff, 64, 68
 Takano Minoru, 129, 261n
 Takano Takeji, 49n
 Takase Kiyoshi, 34, 39–49 *passim*, 58–68 *passim*, 384 (biog.)
 Takatsu Seido, 19, 31–35 *passim*, 49, 63f, 68, 76, 83, 261f, 384 (biog.)
 Takaya Kenkichi, 235
 Takenaka Tsunesaburo, 260
 Tanaka, Prime Minister, 151, 156, 163, 173n, 179f, 189
 Tanaka Seigen, 182, 189–95 *passim*, 250, 385 (biog.)
 Taniguchi Naohei, 239, 242
 Taniguchi Zentarō, 49n, 75f, 90, 385 (biog.)

- Tashiro Fumihisa, 195
 TASS, 118
Tasuha, 252
 Tateoka Masaaki, 236
 Tateyama Toshitada, 175
 Tatsumi Tsuneyo, 260
 Tazoe Tetsuji, 5f
 Terada Mitsugu, 261
 Terauchi, Prime Minister, 17
Tenko, *see* Defections
 Thaelman, Ernst, 234
 Theses: Shanghai (1925), 84-87, 94f, 283-92 (text); Heller (1925), 89-94 *passim*; Moscow (1926), 105-6, 293-94 (text); 1927, 119-24, 139-48 *passim*, 184-89, 198, 202-10 *passim*, 227, 243, 257, 273-75, 295-308 (text); 1928, 168-71; 1931, 199-210 *passim*, 220, 225-30 *passim*, 234, 309-31 (text); 1932, 229-39 *passim*, 243-52 *passim*, 257, 275, 332-51 (text). *See also* Comintern, theses
 Third International, *see* Comintern
Tokensetsusha, 225, 261
 Tokuda Kyuichi, 39, 43ff, 58, 150, 191; 1st JCP, bureau, and group, 48f, 58, 63-68 *passim*, 76f, 79, 94-96; 2d JCP, 112, 117ff; imprisonment, 154n, 215-19, 264, 267; 385-86 (biog.)
 Tokyo Imperial University, 17f, 58, 108, 156, 182, 188, 263
 Tokyo Kotsu Rodo Kumiai, 211
 Tokyo Municipal Employees Union, 262
 Tokyo Musanto, 174, 221
 Tokyo Proletarian Party (Tokyo Musanto), 174, 221
 Tokyo Steel Workers Union, 23, 50
 Tokyo Traffic Workers Union, 262
 Tokyo Transportation Workers Union (Tokyo Kotsu Rodo Kumiai), 211
 Tolstoy, 3, 19
 Toshiaki Yukimori, 176
 Toyota Sunao, 112n, 184f
 Trial of communists (1931), 215-20
 Trotsky, 14, 40, 60, 118, 164, 251
 True Progress Society (Seishinkai), 23
 Tsinan Incident, 163
 Tsujii Taminosuke, 49n, 50, 63f, 68, 83, 88, 386-87 (biog.)
 Ueda Otoichi, 191, 237
 Ueda Shigeki, 45, 49n, 63, 64n, 68, 387 (biog.)
 Umeda Yuzura, 235
Under the Flag of Marxism (Marukushizumu no Hata no Moto Ni), 108
 Unification Movement League, 116
 Unionism, *see* Labor movement; Labor unions; *and individual unions by name*
 United States, 4, 27f, 35-43 *passim*. *See also* American Communist Party; Imperialism; Washington Conference
 Universal Suffrage Manhood Act (1925), 81, 94, 148, 271
 Universal Suffrage Study Society (Futsusenkyo Kenkyukai), 18
 Universities, *see* Student movement *and individual universities by name*
 Urata Takeo, 49n, 58, 63f, 68, 110, 129
 U.S.S.R., *see* Russia
Vanguard (Zenei), 45, 49n, 50, 59, 66
 Vasiliev, B. A., 119, 169
Voice of the People (Minshu no Koe), 261
 Voitinsky, Gregory, 29, 39, 60n, 83-84, 89n, 105
 Volk, Comintern official, 197-200 *passim*; "Theses on the Urgent Tasks of the Japanese Communist Party," 206-7
 Wada Kiichiro, 40, 45
 Wada Yosajii, 260
 Wakatsuki, Prime Minister, 215, 223
 Waseda University, 18f, 34, 58, 67-69, 100
 Waseda University Incident, 67-69
 Washington Conference, 40, 42
 Watanabe Haruo, 39-45 *passim*
 Watanabe Masanosuke, 21, 171, 173n, 186; labor activities, 46, 50, 57, 76, 87-92 *passim*, 159f; 1st JCP and group, 49n, 63-68 *passim*, 84, 94; 2d JCP, 112-19 *passim*, 125, 138ff, 154f; vs. Inomata, 143-53 *passim*, 178, 243; 387-88 (biog.)
 Watanabe Mitsuzo, 32, 49n, 63n, 64n, 68
 Watchmakers Union, 32
 Wednesday Society, 14, 39, 49n
 Whip-and-Candy policy, 72, 76, 82, 271
 White Terror, 67, 71
Worker (Rodosha), 10
 Worker-Farmer Party (Rodosha Nominto), 173
 Workers' Faction (Rodosha), 186f
Workers' News (Rodosha Shinbun), 50
 Yamaguchi Koken, 3, 7
 Yamakawa Hitoshi, 3-14 *passim*, 24ff, 45, 48, 56, 117, 157, 159, 210, 250f, 269; influence, 19, 50-54, 66, 76-80 *passim*, 87, 95, 127, 178; arrested, 68, 262; Yamakawaism, 73-76 *passim*, 81, 107n, 118, 134-37, 274-75; anti-Yamakawaism, 84f, 95, 107f, 110-11, 115, 122, 145f, 179-80, 203; "Change of Direction in the Proletarian Movement," 50-53, 59, 110; "The United Front of the Proletariat," 53-54; 388-89 (biog.)
 Yamamoto Aki, 252
 Yamamoto Chuhei, 188n

- Yamamoto Kenzo, 49n, 64–68 *passim*, 83, 88, 125, 138f, 200, 230; labor activities, 50, 57, 90f; candidate for Diet, 150, 191; in U.S.S.R., 154, 165–68 *passim*, 196–99 *passim*, 251, 254ff, 264; “A Letter to the Japanese Communists,” 257–60, 352–61 (text); 389 (biog.)
- Yamamoto Kumeki, 188n, 189
- Yamamoto Masami, 228, 230, 239–42
- Yamamoto Senji, 173, 176
- Yamashita Heiji, 239, 242
- Yamashita Tokuji, 235
- Yang Ming-chai, 29
- Yi Chung-rim, 31
- Yi Ch’un-suk, 30
- Yohena Tomotaro, 69
- Yorozu Choho*, 4, 8
- Yoshida Hajime, 39–45 *passim*
- Yoshida Yoshiichi, 214, 224
- Yoshikawa Morikuni, 32, 49, 63f, 68, 135, 389 (biog.)
- Yoshino Sakuzo, 17f, 99n, 268
- Yoshiwara Gentaro, 29f, 35, 39
- Young Communist International, 58, 168, 175, 195
- Yuaikai (Friendly Society), 20–24, 50, 55f, 70
- Zemenof, Lazarus, 19
- Zempyo (National Council of Japanese Labor Unions), 261f
- Zen Nihon Kumiai Domei, 102f
- Zen Nihon Musan Seinen Domei, 93–94, 154, 156, 163
- Zen Nihon Musansha Geijetsu Renmei (NAPF), 213
- Zen Nihon Nomin Kumiai, 103, 160, 213
- Zen Nihon Nomin Kumiai Domei, 101
- Zen Nihon Rodo Sodomei, 261
- Zenei*, *see Vanguard*
- Zenkoku Rono Taishuto, 221ff, 261
- Zenkoku Taishuto, 221
- Zenkyo (National Council of Japanese Labor Unions), 174–75, 190–97 *passim*, 203–4, 210, 218, 226, 237ff, 245, 252–53; communist influence in, 174–76, 181–83, 188, 196, 211f, 240, 243
- Zenkyo Renovation League (Zenkyo Sashin Domei, or Satsudo), 195ff, 252
- Zenno (National Peasant Union), 160, 181, 195–96, 212–13, 252, 261f
- Zenno National Congress (Zenno Zenkoku Kaigi), 204, 212–13, 237, 239
- Zenro (National Labor Union League), 221f, 261
- Zenshin*, 250
- Zinoviev, Gregory, 36–44 *passim*, 59f, 70f, 78, 118

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